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ON US SOIL**
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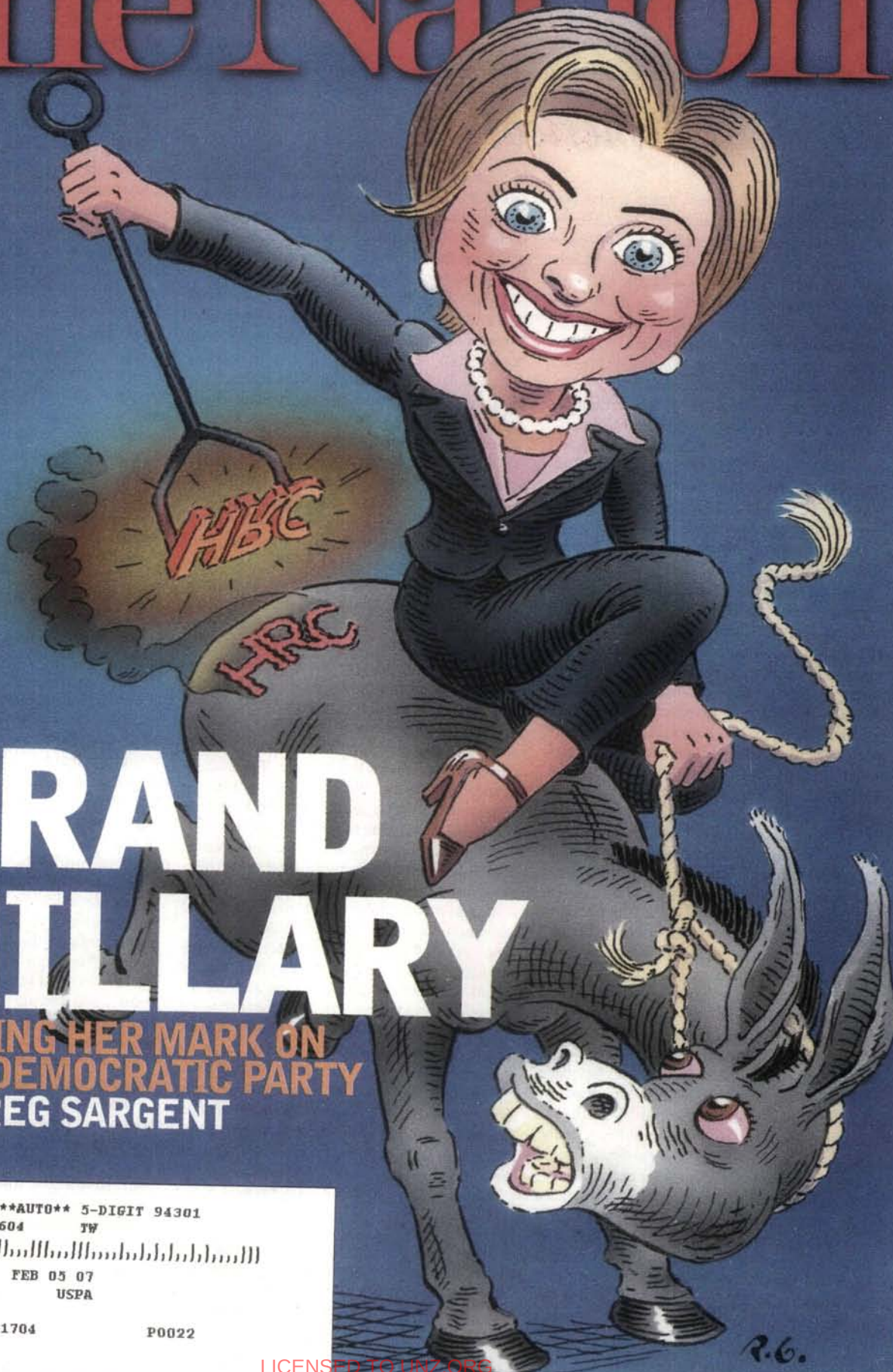
**HIGH NOON ON
THE BORDER**
Marc Cooper

**SARTRE'S
GOD PROBLEM**
Norman Mailer

**EPISTEMOLOGY
OF THE CLOSET**
Martha Nussbaum

BRAND HILLARY

**MAKING HER MARK ON
THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY**
by GREG SARGENT



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EDITORIALS

So Much Hypocrisy

So much outrage. So much hypocrisy.

In recent weeks, plenty of scandal fodder has become public: more corrupt contracting in Iraq; allegations that Air Force Academy cadets are coerced into becoming evangelical Christians; new evidence that the military tried to cover up the details of the friendly-fire death of Pat Tillman (who turned down an NFL contract to serve as an Army Ranger in Afghanistan); and, most notably, the Downing Street memo, which is the latest indication that the Bush Administration misled the nation on the way to war. On May 1 the *Sunday Times* of London disclosed a memo that detailed a secret July 23, 2002, briefing for Prime Minister Tony Blair at 10 Downing Street. As part of this meeting, Richard Dearlove, the head of MI-6 (England's CIA), just back from consultations in Washington, reported that the Bush Administration viewed war with Iraq as inevitable. According to the memo, Dearlove told Blair, "Bush wanted to remove Saddam, through military action, justified by the conjunction of terrorism and WMD. But the intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy. [Bush's National Security Council] had no patience with the UN route, and no enthusiasm for publishing material on the Iraqi regime's record. There was little discussion in Washington of the aftermath after military action." The memo also noted that Foreign Secretary Jack Straw had said that the case against Saddam Hussein was "thin" and that Iraq's "WMD capability was less than that of Libya, North Korea or Iran." British Attorney General Peter Goldsmith observed that the legal basis for an invasion of Iraq was iffy.

The British memo undermines the Administration's claim that it pursued a diplomatic solution in good faith before opting for war. It is also a reminder that the White House was recklessly

negligent in its failure to prepare for the postinvasion period (a scandal in and of itself). But the most explosive portion of the memo—neglected by US mainstream media for weeks before finally getting inside-page coverage—was the assertion that intelligence and facts were being "fixed" by the Administration. Yet it caused hardly a ripple in official Washington. John Conyers and eighty-seven other House Democrats wrote Bush a letter noting that the leaked memo raised "troubling new questions regarding the legal justifications for the war as well as the integrity of your own Administration" and they asked whether there had been an effort to "fix" the intelligence. Bush did not reply.

But the White House, the Pentagon and the Republicans did go crazy over a retracted *Newsweek* report, based on an anonymous senior government source who later backed away from his assertion that interrogators at Guantánamo had flushed a Koran down a toilet. This short report—which followed similar claims by detainees—was blamed for deadly riots in Afghanistan, and led to self-righteous Administration officials decrying the news-magazine for inaccurate reporting. "The report has had serious consequences," White House spokesman Scott McClellan huffed. "People have lost their lives. The image of the United States has been damaged abroad." And before *Newsweek* fully retracted the item, McClellan declared, "It's puzzling that while *Newsweek* now acknowledges that they got the facts wrong, they refused to retract the story. I think there's a certain journalistic standard that should be met and in this instance it was not."

McClellan could have been talking about the Bush White House. As the Downing Street memo shows, Bush was not concerned with standards. And he got the facts wrong, people lost their lives and the image of the United States was damaged abroad. As tragic as the *Newsweek* episode has been, the true scandal is the Downing Street memo. But unlike *Newsweek*, the White House has not apologized. And it has not retracted its lies.



CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

We ♥ Air America!

New York City

Nicholas von Hoffman doesn't like Air America ["Calling Air America," May 23]. He thinks that Janeane Garofalo talks about sex too much, that Al Franken talks too slowly and that Jerry Springer is a "barking seal." He writes that Air America "loses itself in its own smog." Whatever emotional button Air America pushed in von Hoffman led not only to this meanspirited prose but to willful distortion of facts in service of his bias.

Von Hoffman states, "As of this writing Air America is still not back on the air in Chicago." But Air America did go on the air in Chicago on May 5 (WCPT 850 AM), the very day his article was posted on the *Nation* website. Long before his deadline, I told von Hoffman we would soon be on in Chicago. He chose not to follow up.

Similarly von Hoffman writes, "Al Franken, the network's star personality, had been on fewer than 10 percent of the number of stations carrying Rush Limbaugh." This is technically true but very misleading. What matters is not the quantity of stations but the size of the total audience. A station in Dallas reaches 100 times as many people as one in a small Texas town. In January Air America was reaching a potential audience of 60 million Americans over the age of 12. By May it was reaching more than 100 million, 60 percent of the total US audience. Limbaugh has been on the air for eighteen years. Air America is far ahead of where his show was at a similar point in its development.

Von Hoffman quotes an exec from Democracy Radio, an Air America competitor, saying Air America "is very big on creating a splash with celebrities...celebrities in the long run don't make as big a splash as real broadcasters do.... to be successful in broadcasting, use experienced broadcasters." It's not surprising that a competitor will use any argument, however specious, to diminish its better-known rival. It is disappointing that von Hoffman chose not to use any of the facts I gave him when he read me that quote: In addition to Randi Rhodes and Jerry Springer, Air America hosts with previous broadcast experience include Franken's co-host, Katherine Lanpher; *Morning Sedition* co-host Mark Reilly; and late-night star Mike Malloy. Thus, five of Air America's six weekday shows include "experienced broadcasters," and the weekend includes radio veteran Laura Flanders.

As to the contention that "celebrities" don't do well on radio, recent ratings in New York show that *Majority Report*, hosted by Sam Seder and Janeane Garofalo, defeated all talk shows in its time slot. Al Franken's show grew 17 percent

in a period that was generally bad for political talk (Limbaugh's ratings were down 33 percent).

Von Hoffman defines Garofalo solely by a couple of minutes of a single broadcast in which she joked about sex. He does not mention that guests on *Majority Report* have included Archbishop Desmond Tutu; Senators Jon Corzine and Barbara Boxer; Representatives Rahm Emanuel, Bernie Sanders and Maxine Waters; Andy Stern of the SEIU; and writers Malcolm Gladwell, Howard Zinn, Jim Wallis, Rick Hertzberg, Robert Reich, Lewis Lapham, Dave Eggers, Bob Herbert; and *Nation* editor Katrina vanden Heuvel, who appears regularly.

Von Hoffman asks rhetorically, "Coupled with Springer's reputation and Garofalo's mouth, is there a danger that Air America may be a hit among a white-boy, 14-to-24 demographic and Smut America to political fence sitters in Ohio?" This misrepresents Air America's content and its audience. Commercial radio is an environment dominated by Howard Stern and "morning zoo" shows. Air America's programming is spirited and entertaining but far less risqué. The audience is almost 50 percent female and consists mostly of people 25 to 54. Moreover, von Hoffman buys into the fundamentalist propaganda that attributed Bush's victory to an electorate for whom any liberal reference to sex helps Republicans. This doesn't square with Laura Bush's speech before the press corps in which she joked about *Desperate Housewives* and going to male strip clubs.

Von Hoffman parrots a popular conservative talking-point about liberals: "Progressive talk-radio has to be for something. You can't live off a straight diet of political paranoia." It should go without saying that there really isn't a positive moral position on such issues as torture. But any fair assessment of Air America's programming would acknowledge that its hosts and dozens of authors, elected officials and public interest leaders have numerous positive ideas and have found Air America a unique way to reach an audience of millions previously inaccessible to progressives. So has *The Nation*, which—von Hoffman's dyspepsia notwithstanding—often features a photo of Garofalo in its print ads and which uses her voice in its radio spots, broadcast on... Air America.

DANNY GOLDBERG
CEO, Air America Radio

Northbrook, Ill.

In my book, *Road to Air America*, I discussed the difficulties we had raising money for the first liberal radio network in history. I got plenty of introductions from the Clintons and Gores,

who were very much behind our project and knew the urgency of getting a counter to Rush Limbaugh and his clones. So I was very hopeful that these rich liberals from Hollywood, business and politics would be glad to make an investment, but I was unable to raise anything from these people. I learned quickly that with money comes a lot of ego and pride of authorship. In business, we call this "the not invented here syndrome." In addition, all the media thought we were doomed from the start, including the liberal print and broadcast sector.

Well, Air America is now in fifty-six cities and every major population center. More than twenty of our affiliates come from major radio and entertainment corporations and are very happy to replace their failing content with the Air America content. Also, the socioeconomic profile of our listeners is very appealing to our advertisers. Out of the ashes rises Air America, alive and well, while some reports show conservative talk audiences down 30 percent.

So you'd think that we'd get at least some favorable press from other liberal media. But Air America has been in almost every major paper lately, getting criticism galore. The right wing started the ball rolling with Matt Drudge and others, and Eric Zorn, a liberal journalist from the *Chicago Tribune*, wrote a negative article about our new station in Chicago. Now comes Nicholas von Hoffman's critical *Nation* article, which was full of inaccuracies that he could have straightened out if he had bothered to call me or my wife, Anita. I have yet to read a positive article about us in *The Nation* or any progressive publication, although Air America Radio is one of the major media rollouts in years. So what's going on with liberals in journalism?

I believe the problem is competitive jealousy. What I found while trying to raise money for Air America was not pretty. As our business plan circulated through Hollywood, Washington and New York, I got lots of disturbing feedback. Many of the criticisms came from media owners and executives who were major donors to the DNC but who did everything they could to convince people we would fail. Obviously, a big radio network, even run by a Democrat, does not want to see competition.

Rich progressives are very fragmented in their support of progressive causes. What we need is coordination and solidarity similar to that built by the right after the Goldwater debacle. The right coordinates when it comes to media and journalism. They understand the propaganda model and are willing to sacrifice their egos for their cause. I am not optimistic about the solidarity of rich progressives, so I think the money and resources will eventually come from

(Continued on Page 24)

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The Posada File

The CIA document, stamped SECRET, is dated June 22, 1976, and titled "Possible Plans of Cuban Exile Extremists to blow up a Cubana airliner." A "usually reliable" source, described as a "businessman with close ties to the Cuban exile community," reports that an extremist group led by an anti-Castro terrorist named Orlando Bosch "plans to place a bomb on a Cubana airline flight traveling between Panama and Havana." The source says that the original plan for the attack called for two bombs to be placed on Cubana flight 467 on June 21. (This did not take place.) This intelligence report is disseminated to multiple US agencies, including the FAA, but there is no indication any action is taken, or that a warning is provided to Cuban authorities.

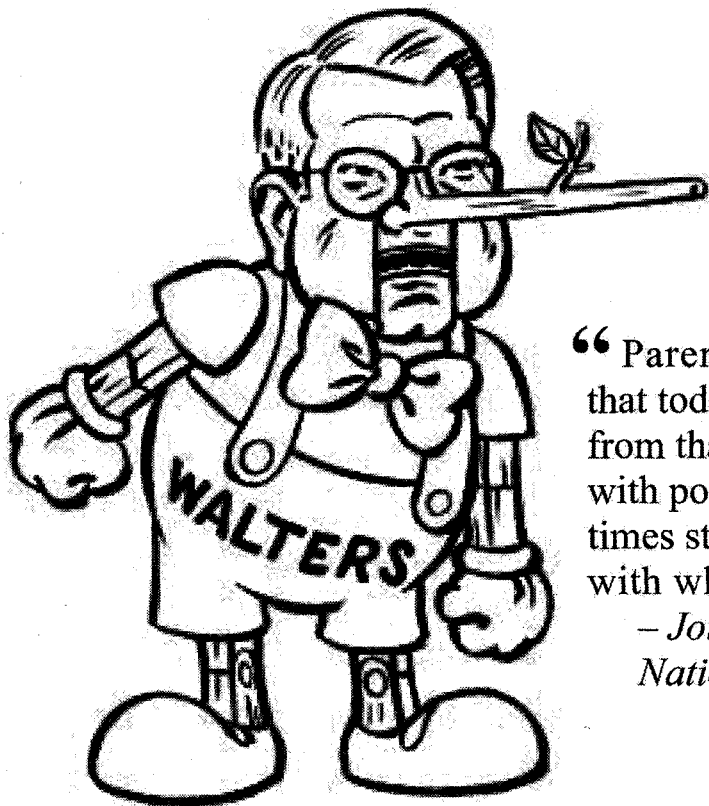
Less than four months later, on October 6, two bombs explode on Cubana Flight 455, which has just taken off from Barbados. The plane is carrying seventy-three people, including Cuba's teenage fencing team and eleven Guyanese citizens, most of them students on their way to Havana to attend medical school. All aboard perish when the plane crashes into the sea. A CIA source subsequently reports that sometime around the last week of September, another renowned anti-Castro exile in Caracas, Luis Posada Carriles, was overheard stating: "We are going to hit a Cuban airliner."

This past March, Posada sneaked into the United States using a false passport and requested political asylum. Despite repeated demands for his arrest and extradition to Venezuela, where the crime was planned, US authorities made no move until May 17. Homeland Security officials finally detained him after he gave an interview to the *Miami Herald* in which he discussed the relative ease with which he'd been able to move around Florida and then held a press conference.

The international community is now waiting to see what the Bush Administration will do with him now. Posada's case not only forces the question of whether, in the opinion of Washington, there are "good" terrorists and "bad" ones but also refocuses attention on the cozy relationships that existed in the 1970s between violent anti-Castro Cubans and US intelligence. Declassified documents raise issues about what kind of advance warnings the CIA and FBI had about the attack on Flight 455 and what actions they took—or failed to take—to stop it.

Shortly after the bombing, the Castro government accused the CIA of "directly" participating in the atrocity. Not only were the leaders of the likely responsible exile group, CORU, known to have past ties to the agency but the name and phone number of the FBI legal attaché (Legat) in Caracas, Joseph Leo, was found among papers of one of the two Venezuelans arrested in Barbados and charged with placing the bombs on the plane.

On October 8, 1976, two days after the bombing, Leo filed a teletype to FBI headquarters in which he admitted multiple contacts in the two years leading up to the bombing with one of the bombers, Hernan Ricardo, whom he described as a photojournalist passing intelligence on Cuban Embassy officials to the FBI "in the personal service of Luis Posada." During one meeting, "Ricardo suggested Legat might wish to make some suggestions



“Parents are often unaware that today's marijuana is different from that of a generation ago, with potency levels ten to twenty times stronger than the marijuana with which they were familiar.”
– John Walters, Office of National Drug Control Policy

The European Union says it ain't so.

"Statements in the popular media that the potency of cannabis has increased by ten times or more in recent decades are not supported by the limited data that are available from either the USA or Europe. The greatest long-term changes in potency appear to have occurred in the USA. It should be noted here that before 1980 herbal cannabis potency in the USA was very low by European standards....

"The natural variation in the THC content between and within samples of herbal cannabis or cannabis resin at any one time and place far exceeds any long-term changes that may have occurred either in Europe or the USA."

– *Overview of Cannabis Potency, 2004*, European Union Monitoring Centre on Drugs and Drug Addiction (Full report at www.csdp.org/research/insights6web.pdf)

Drug policy should be based on science, not politics.

CommonSenseDrugPolicy.org, Mike Gray, Chair; Robert Field, Co-Chair
DrugWarFacts.org, MedicalMJ.org, AddictInTheFamily.org

COMMENT

regarding courses of action that might be taken against the Cuban Embassy in Caracas by an anti-Castro group of which he formed part," Leo wrote. His response, Leo claimed, had been to tell Ricardo that this was not part of the function of his office, and that in any event he "abhorred terrorist activities."

Just tapping Ricardo's phone might have revealed the entire terrorist plot against the plane. But no such investigation was contemplated, let alone undertaken. Instead, when Ricardo returned to Leo's office at the end of September and asked for an expedited US visa, Leo took his application. In reviewing Ricardo's passport, Leo noted that Ricardo had been in Trinidad on September 1—the day the Guyanese consulate in Port-of-Spain had been bombed—"and wondered in view of Ricardo's association with Luis Posada, if his presence there during that period was coincidence." Yet when Ricardo returned October 1 with a letter signed by Posada attesting to his employment in Caracas, Leo raised no concerns with the vice consul, and the visa was provided. The last thing Leo remembers Ricardo saying

was that "he might also be visiting Barbados" on this trip.

These CIA and FBI documents are part of a massive file on Posada and the Cubana plane bombing, which has been only partly declassified. What is available so far does not indicate that the United States covertly orchestrated or supported the attack. But the files do indicate that the close ties between CIA and FBI officials and allies inside the Cuban exile movement enabled the bombing to go forward—despite ample intelligence that, if acted upon, could have prevented it. When the entire file is made public, as it should and must be, the degree of US responsibility will be more apparent. Now that the Bush Administration has detained Posada, how that information is used, as well as what happens to Posada, will say much about whether those cozy ties of the past have survived into the post-9/11 present. PETER KORNBLOH

Peter Kornbluh directs the Cuba Documentation Project at the National Security Archive. A declassified dossier on Luis Posada can be found on the archive's website (www.nsarchive.org).

CALVIN TRILLIN

AN ADVANCE LOOK AT UN AMBASSADOR JOHN BOLTON'S ATTEMPT TO PERSUADE MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL THAT THE NEXT COUNTRY WE'D LIKE TO INVADE HAS WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

Displaying photos to provide a peek
At how these rogues with wicked plans can sneak
Their dirty bombs—each capable, no doubt,
Of taking Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, out—
To secret spots in mobile weapons-vans,
He said, "We must, right now, disrupt their plans.
These dirty bombs require our deterrence.
On that you have my personal assurance."

A delegate then said, "I can't agree.
This looks like sanitation work to me.
We've previously analyzed that spot.
It's photographs of garbage trucks you've got."

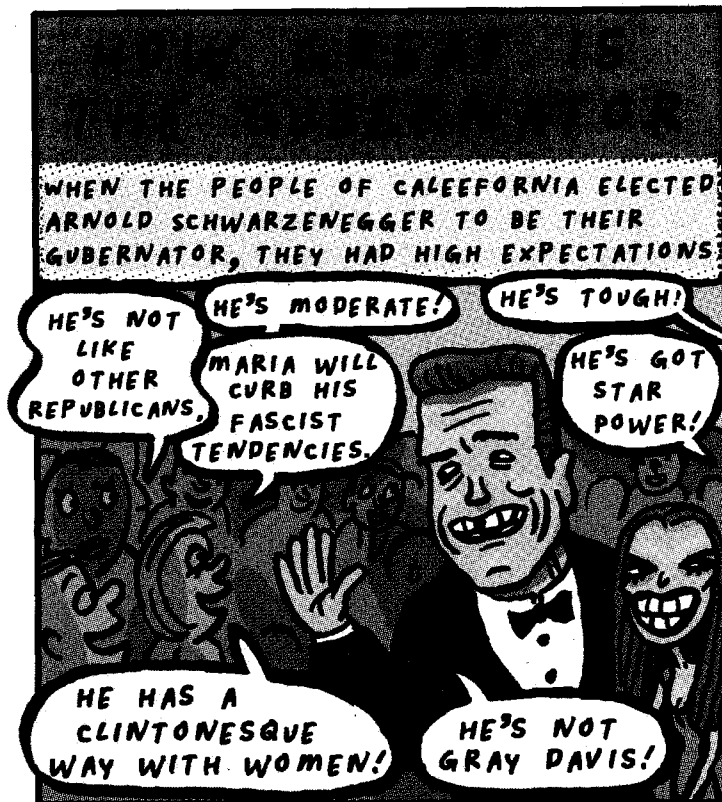
John Bolton's face grew red, and then a shade
That no one there had ever seen displayed.
"You say they're garbage trucks!" he shouted.
"That flunky from the CIA who flouted
My orders mentioned garbage trucks as well,
And now, by Jove, his life's a living hell:
Yes, undercover's where he is today.
He's posing as a beggar in Bombay.

"You'll see the consequence obstruction yields.
We'll pulverize your lands, then burn your fields.
That's right, you turkeys: If you thwart my wishes
We'll tear your hearts out, feed them to the fishes.
And when we've put you through those sticky wickets,
We'll make you pay for all your parking tickets."

Enumerating punishments *beaucoup*,
He then reached down and, taking off his shoe,
Began to pound the table with its heel,
Continuing with threats that seemed surreal,
Plus noises—first a rumble, then a squeal,
And then a bark that sounded like a seal.
The UK delegate was heard to mutter,
"Cor blimey, lads, I fear the man's a nutter."

In time, while Bolton prophesied their doom,
The delegates, in silence, left the room,
And left him there, still saying he would slit
Their throats and roast their organs on a spit.
Outdoors, they still could hear the faint tattoo
Of Bolton pounding loudly with his shoe.

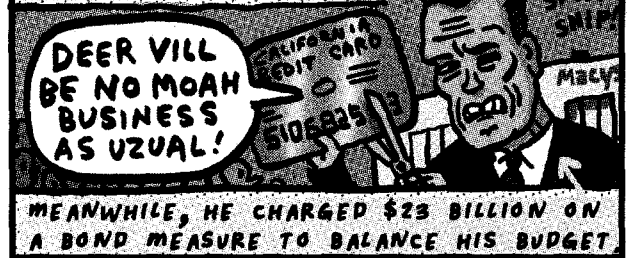
COMIX NATION



HE CRUSADED TO RID CALIFORNIA POLITICS OF SPECIAL INTEREST MONEY, THEN HE POCKETED MORE THAN TWICE AS MUCH OF IT AS GRAY DAVIS DID!



IN SPEECHES AT SHOPPING MALLS HE MAKES A SHOW OF CUTTING A GIANT CREDIT CARD IN HALF...



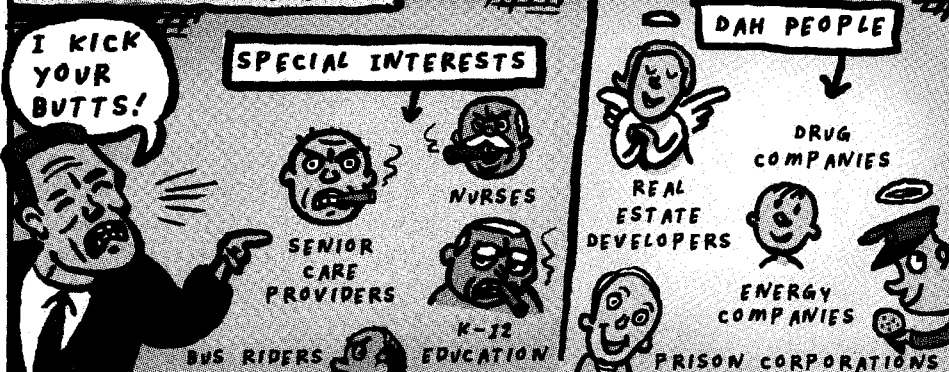
HOLLYWOOD MOVIE STAR GOVERNORS ARE HIGH MAINTENANCE. IT TAKES FIVE NONPROFIT CORPORATIONS TO RAISE MONEY FOR HIS LUXURIOUS LIFESTYLE.



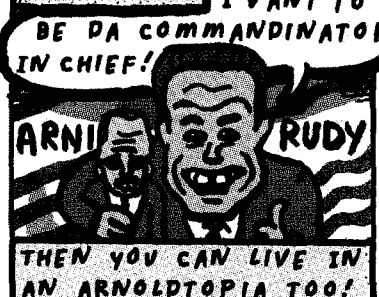
HIS \$100 MILLION IN PERSONAL ASSETS ARE IN A BLIND TRUST SO THAT THERE CAN BE NO CONFLICT OF INTEREST.



ARNOLD HAS KEPT HIS PROMISE TO FIGHT THE SPECIAL INTERESTS. AS LONG AS YOU AGREE WITH HIS DEFINITION OF SPECIAL INTERESTS



NOW ALL WE NEED IS AN AMENDMENT TO ALLOW AUSTRIAN BORN MUSCLEMEN TO RUN FOR PRESIDENT. I WANT TO BE DA COMMANDINATOR IN CHIEF!



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Lloyd Dangle is the creator of the weekly comic strip Troubletown (www.troubletown.com).

LLOYD DANGLE

Moyers Fights Back

The Bush Administration allies who have taken over the Corporation for Public Broadcasting may have thought they could turn public television into another of their echo chambers without a fight. But they didn't count on Bill Moyers.

Moyers, who secured thirty Emmys during three decades on PBS, stormed out of retirement May 15 to condemn manipulations of the network's content and programming engineered by Kenneth Tomlinson, the Republican chair of the CPB board of directors, and to call for a renewed commitment to principled journalism at PBS and throughout American media. "I simply never imagined that any CPB chairman, Democrat or Republican, would cross the line from resisting White House pressure to carrying it out for the White House. But that's what Kenneth Tomlinson has done," Moyers told more than 2,000 activists, academics and journalists gathered in St. Louis for the National Conference for Media Reform. Moyers, who stepped down in December as the host of the highly regarded PBS program *NOW With Bill Moyers*, detailed Tomlinson's partisan meddling, from the hiring of Bush aides and allies to fill key positions at the CPB to his allocation of \$5 million in tax money to develop a weekly broadcast featuring the editorial board of the *Wall Street Journal*. But his main focus was the revelation that Tomlinson spent \$10,000 last year to hire a contractor to monitor *NOW* and report on its supposed political bias. "Gee, Ken, for \$2.50 a week, you could pick up a copy of *TV Guide* on the newsstand. A subscription is even cheaper, and I would have sent you a coupon that can save you up to 62 percent," joked Moyers. "Hell, you could have called me—collect—and I would have told you what was on the broadcast that night." (The full text of Moyers's speech is at www.commondreams.org/views05/0516-34.htm.)

But Moyers was not just poking fun at Tomlinson—he was fighting back. He revealed that he'd written Tomlinson, suggesting that the pair debate the network's future on a PBS program of Tomlinson's choice, and called for the release of the results of the *NOW* monitoring. He also endorsed a call by Consumers Union, Media Access Project, Common Cause, the Consumer Federation of America and Free Press for a campaign "to take public broadcasting back—to take it back from threats, from interference, from those who would tell us we can only think what they command us to think." The groups plan to hold hearings around the country. In addition, there's a national petition campaign (www.freepress.net/action/pbs) to stop "top-down partisan meddling" with the network that seemed more timely than ever the day after Moyers spoke, when it was revealed that the GOP majority on the CPB board were scheming to redirect money from news coverage to music programming and preparing an "examination" of NPR's Middle East coverage for evidence of bias.

Taking back PBS is merely the most urgent of the media reform initiatives highlighted at the conference, which also discussed moves to label so-called video "news" releases produced by the government and corporations; to close the digital divide by developing broadband wireless services as public utilities; and to reverse media consolidation. None of these fights will be won,

however, without expanding the media reform movement beyond its current progressive base—making permanent the left-right coalition that emerged in 2003 to successfully beat back plans to rewrite ownership rules. Moyers held out hope for such a coalition, reading a letter from Congressman Ron Paul, a Texas conservative who praised *NOW*, and recalling that when President Nixon sought to cut funding for public affairs programming on PBS, it was saved because "there were still Republicans in America who did not march in ideological lockstep and who stood on principle against politicizing public television." Tomlinson will not be stopped by Democrats alone; Republicans must step up too and say, "Hands off PBS."

JOHN NICHOLS

John Nichols, our Washington correspondent, is a Free Press co-founder.

Israeli Boycott: A Mistake

The blacklist of Israeli academics declared by Britain's leading union of university faculty is a bad idea. The 50,000-member Association of University Teachers (AUT), seeking to support Palestinian rights, passed resolutions late in April targeting faculty members at two universities in Israel, Haifa and Bar-Ilan. Professors there are banned from "any form of academic and cultural cooperation, collaboration, or joint projects" with British academics, including participation in scholarly conferences and lecturing at British universities. The boycott holds faculty members at Haifa and Bar-Ilan responsible for the policies of the Israeli government in the West Bank and Gaza. Actually, Israeli universities, especially Haifa, have been active centers of opposition to the occupation. The Sharon government would like to gain more political control over the universities to curtail their role as centers of opposition. The boycott thus threatens the forces inside Israel that oppose the occupation and have been working to change the government and diverts attention from the occupation. Here in the United States, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) rightly condemned the boycott for interfering with academic freedom, which requires "the freest possible international movement of scholars and ideas." The sixty Palestinian groups that called for the boycott argued that Israel systematically denies Palestinians many of these freedoms on a daily basis. That is true, but protest against those policies should be directed at the Israeli government, not at faculty members. The British union exempts from the blacklist "conscientious Israeli academics and intellectuals opposed to their state's colonial and racist policies." Thus an academic seeking to participate in a conference or give a guest lecture would be required to be cleared first by passing a political test. That requirement, as the AAUP stated, "deepens the injury to academic freedom." The Middle East Studies Association and the American Political Science Association have joined the AAUP in opposing the boycott, and several thousand academics have signed a petition supporting the AAUP statement. AUT will meet to reconsider the boycott on May 26. They should reverse their earlier decision and abandon it.

JON WIENER

Jon Wiener is a Nation contributing editor.

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PATRICIA J. WILLIAMS

Salt in the Wound

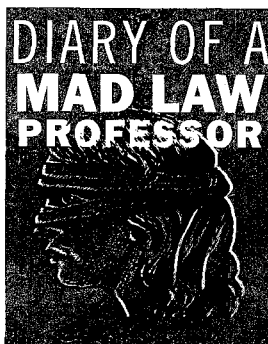
Here I was, hooked up to a heart monitor as the doctor zeroed in with needle in hand. It wasn't a big deal. I was about to be anesthetized for a routine if mildly unpleasant colonoscopy. I wouldn't even have been consciously aware of being stressed but for the monitor's tinny, insistent *allegriissimo*: Clear as a bell, my heart began to race as the needle neared, despite my rational mind.

It was fascinating how completely my subtlest anxiety was reflected in my heart rate. It lasted no longer than a few seconds; the prick was minor, yet my body registered a little internal yelp. I remarked upon it because I had been reviewing statistics showing that African-Americans suffer from chronic hypertension at five to seven times the rate of Americans deemed white. While high blood pressure is not necessarily associated with emotional distress, distress can certainly increase blood pressure.

I do not mean to imply that my little moment of trepidation represented any significant measure of arterial tension. Surely it didn't rise to the average stress level of getting my seventh grader to finish his homework. Nothing about the situation ranked near the way my temples throb whenever Michael Jackson and O.J. Simpson are compressed into the same sentence.

This line of contemplation began when reading Stephen Dubner's profile of Harvard economist Roland Fryer in the March 20 *New York Times Magazine*. Dubner wrote glowingly of "Fryer's notion that there might be a genetic predisposition at work...heightened when he came across a period illustration that seemed to show a slave trader in Africa licking the face of a prospective slave.... A person with a higher capacity for salt retention might also retain more water and thus increase his chance of surviving. So it might have been that a slave trader would try to select, with a lick to the cheek, the 'saltier' Africans.... Africans who did manage to survive the voyage—and who then formed the gene pool of modern African Americans—may have been disproportionately marked by hypertension."

I do not have room to detail all the ways this is wrong. But for a lucid refutation, see Jay Kaufman's "The Anatomy of a Medical Myth" at <http://raceandgenomics.ssrc.org/Kaufman/pf>; and see "Epidemiology and Society: A Forum on Epidemiology and Global Health," in Volume 14, No. 1 of the journal *Epidemiology*, January 2003. The theory Fryer describes, known as "the Slavery Hypothesis," has been circulating since the early 1980s. It has been consistently refuted. One can start with the obvious—that, as Kaufman puts it, the logic is "exactly backwards, as the 'saltier' Africans would be exactly the ones who were *not* retaining sodium, and therefore...the least able to endure the voyage." Nor are there data showing a genetic marker for sodium retention. Assuming there were one, it would be misleading to call it, as much of the literature does, a "slavery gene" instead of a "hypertension gene," according to Robert Pollack, professor of biology at Columbia University. Nor has such a hypothesis accounted for why no populations of West Africans display



endemic propensities for hypertension; or why Finns have rates of hypertension comparable to African-Americans; nor has there been any study of whether slave-descended Americans who are light-skinned enough to have "passed" into the white population manifest the same rates of hypertension as their darker-skinned kin.

But science aside for a second, let's back up to that "period engraving." In the first place, you really have to stretch-spin that weirdness into scientific observation. If I saw some slave trader sidling up

to an African, like a moose at a salt lick, I'd sooner conclude that the trader was extremely salt-deprived. And if I were the shackled prey being licked by some blithering, lizard-tongued trader, the only reasonable response might be to dig deep into one's propensity for physical contraction, arterial or otherwise. But can't we agree that it's a different kind of licking that weighs upon African-Americans these days? Not to rule out nature, but there are more than a few social stressors in the epidemiological mix—from AIDS to crime to disproportionate service in the military. A recent article titled "The Gap: In a Single Statistic, the Measure of a Racial Tragedy," by Newhouse News reporter Jonathan Tilove, states that "in Harlem and on Chicago's South Side, two-thirds of the black boys and one-third of the black girls who reached their 15th birthday would not make 65." This is a stunning social and public health crisis for which genetics cannot be blamed.

I worry about the *New York Times's* vaunting the demonstrably inaccurate propositions of an obscure, 27-year-old junior professor who "has published only a handful of papers so far, all of them written with senior colleagues." Why Dubner's broad embrace of a "unified theory" of black America, of a "grand thesis" of racial status? Fryer is quoted as wondering, "As soon as you say something like, 'Well could the black-white test-score gap be genetics?' everybody gets tensed up. But why shouldn't that be on the table?" Dubner invokes Lawrence Summers's wondering whether "genetics might help explain why women are so underrepresented in the sciences. Summers—who is also an economist and a fan of Fryer's work—is still being punished for his musings. There is a key difference, of course: Summers is not a woman; Fryer is black."

I, for one, do get tensed up when the pre-eminent broadsheet of our nation so easily floats unsustained theories of genetic determinism as "unifying" markers of purported biological difference, or when it is implied that bad science might be less "punished" or suspect if from the mouths of women or blacks. Why this insistent public yearning for a science of immutable distinctions when there is no such science? It is like some quasi-religious faith in the ultimate creationist power of the almighty gene. We must ask what is to be gained, or lost, in this tenacious turning away, this persistent ignoring of the loud and ever-more-rapid bleeping of statistical monitors warning us of the social distress that dwells in the heart of our polity. ■

ERIC ALTERMAN

Cowboys and Eggheads

Liberal Democrats today are faced with an unhappy paradox. The most significant factor in John Kerry's defeat was that, according to exit polls, 79 percent of voters who said terrorism or national security determined their vote chose the chickenhawk over the war hero. Though they agreed with the Democrats on most issues—and agreed, by a 49 to 45 percent margin, according to election day exit polls, that the Iraq War had made us less, not more, secure—a majority of voters still felt safer with the idea of George W. Bush minding the store. Based on the evidence, it is almost a perfectly irrational reaction to reality. Everything the Bush Administration has done in the security realm has proved not merely wasteful and ineffective but counterproductive. Consider the following:

§ Osama bin Laden remains free, and Al Qaeda has been allowed to regroup.

§ Iraq, which was not a terrorist threat before Bush attacked it, now accounts for the killing and maiming of Americans daily.

§ North Korea, the world's most dangerously irrational regime, stands poised to test a nuclear bomb.

§ Iran, another regime motivated by fear and hatred of the United States, also stands poised to develop a nuclear weapon.

§ The most obvious terrorist targets in America—nuclear and chemical plants, water and food supplies and transportation networks—remain as vulnerable to terrorists as they were on September 10, 2001, endangering as many as 12 million people in a single attack.

§ Outside our borders, America is hated as never before, inspiring terrorist recruitment across the Islamic world.

All of these negative developments are the result of Bush Administration policies that required the reversal or rejection of Democratic alternatives. In some cases the Administration achieved its aims by deliberate deception, fooling more than a few supposedly tough-minded "liberal hawks" about not only its evidence but also its intentions—and in a few cases it did so with scare tactics designed to exploit the emotions aroused by the 9/11 attacks. In none of these instances, however, did the Administration win its argument with an honest assessment of the evidence or consideration of available alternatives.

Democrats have a separate set of answers for the problems that bedevil US security policy, as Matthew Yglesias concluded after he surveyed a host of foreign policy programs from the leading Democratic-oriented think tanks and independent analysts in a recent issue of *The American Prospect*. He found a strong consensus on the kinds of steps necessary to develop a foreign policy that will increase our level of protection from catastrophic terrorist attack at home while rebuilding our alliances for the purpose of frustrating the organization and implementation of attacks from abroad. Yglesias included reports from the Democratic Leadership Council, the Century Foundation, the Center for American Progress and the House Homeland Security Committee minority staff. I would add a recently published compen-



dium of articles from the Open Society Institute and the newly formed Security and Peace Institute, titled *Restoring American Leadership*, which does a good job of summing up the position. None are exactly bedtime reading—unless you're trying to fall asleep. And, of course, the problems created and/or exacerbated by the Administration aren't easily solvable; nobody really knows what to do about the unholy mess in Iraq or how to talk North Korea down from its nuclear pretensions now that the Administration's all stick, no carrot policy has proved a miserable failure. Even so, almost all these reports would appeal to any sane person who believes, for instance, that when one particular group attacks your nation, it is a good idea to fight those people rather than another group of people who may speak a similar language, have a similar skin color and practice the same religion but had nothing to do with the attack.

And yet making sense on foreign policy is not enough. It may actually be a net negative. As Bill Clinton famously explained, Americans prefer a President who appears "strong and wrong" to one who seems right but looks weak. If that means getting a bunch of innocent people killed or making foreign policy problems worse, so be it. Council on Foreign Relations president emeritus Leslie Gelb admitted as much when he wrote on the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page of the Democrats' alleged "Cheney Envy." (No, I do not think this was a reference to recent photos of the VP appearing on the Internet.) Gelb argued that "sometimes, even often, he and President Bush use [military power] too blatantly and bluntly, and it backfires. Such has been true of the administration's clumsy and erratic efforts to stop nuclear weapons programs in Iran and North Korea." Nor does it matter that Bush and Cheney "let U.S. forces march off to smash Saddam without a plan to win the peace, or...[that their] contempt alienated our closest allies needlessly." What matters, at least politically, he argued, is that "Americans need to feel assured that our leaders will crush those who would hurt us. Correctly or incorrectly, Americans wonder whether Democrats have the stomach for this. They don't wonder about Mr. Cheney or Mr. Bush."

It's true that the Iraq War has grown increasingly unpopular since the election, and future developments in Iran and North Korea may further reinforce the Administration's failure to face up to the limitations of its aggressive unilateralism. But the fact remains that the only two presidential elections won by a Democrat since 1976 took place in the brief interregnum between the end of the cold war and the beginning of the "war on terror." It's not as if Americans suddenly trusted Democrats on security issues; it is that they allowed themselves to privilege economic issues—where Democrats have long enjoyed the advantage.

So there's the conundrum. Talk tough and reach for your revolver often, and Americans might let you craft their health-care, education and family-leave policies. Speak sensibly about foreign policy, and even if they agree with you, they'll go for the guy with the gun. ■

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ARTICLES

BRAND HILLARY

Not long ago, Senator Hillary Clinton went on a 2006 re-election campaign swing through the North Country, that vast expanse of upstate New York that stretches from Albany to the Canadian border. With its mix of family farms and grubby towns struggling with disappearing manufacturing jobs, the region feels less like the Northeast than like the industrial and agricultural Midwest. In other words, it's not a bad place to gauge how Clinton might play in swing-state America.

It's a question that of late has obsessed the pundits, who frequently, and often quite mindlessly, hold up the most obscure of the Senator's utterances or policies—even ones that echo positions she's held for years—as proof that she's readying herself for a 2008 presidential run. The political classes tend to offer us two tidy Hillary narratives to choose from. The first (courtesy of Dick Morris and company) is that Clinton has given herself a moderate makeover designed to mask the fact that she's really a haughty left-wing elitist, in order to appeal to moderate Republicans and culturally conservative, blue-collar Democrats who are deserting their party. The opposing narrative line (courtesy of her supporters) is that Clinton, a devout Methodist, has revealed her true self as a senator; she's always been more moderate than is generally thought, and, as Anna Quindlen wrote recently in *Newsweek*, “people are finally seeing past the stereotypes and fabrications.”

Yet if you watch Clinton on one of her upstate swings, as I did earlier this spring, it becomes clear that neither story line gets



by GREG SARGENT

it right. What's really happening is that Clinton, a surprisingly agile and ideologically complex politician, is slowly crafting a politics that in some ways is new, and above all is uniquely her own.

Clinton's evolving approach—call it Brand Hillary—is sincerely rooted in her not-easily-categorized worldview, but it's also a calculated response to today's political realities. In effect, she's taking her husband's small-issue centrism—its trademark combination of big but often hollow gestures toward the center, pragmatic economic populism and incremental

liberal policy gains—and remaking it in her own image, updating it for post-9/11 America with an intense interest in military issues.

At the same time, she's also experimenting with an increasingly national message about smart government and GOP extremism and testing new, unthreatening ways of revisiting her most politically disastrous issue: healthcare. In one setting after another, she offered the same impromptu-seeming refrain: “You may remember that when my husband was President, I tried to do something about healthcare. Well, I still have the scars to show for it. But I haven't given up.” That's a line worthy of the man Hillary married—you can picture Bill sitting at the kitchen table in Chappaqua, repeating the line and chuckling, “That's good. That's really good.”

Bill Clinton's political success, of course, sometimes came at great cost to liberal Democrats, and Hillary's brand of politics, too, poses a tough dilemma for liberals and progressives. It asks

them to swallow their discomfort with her tactically shrewd but sometimes morally questionable maneuvers on big issues like war and abortion. In exchange they get less visible victories for progressivism, as well as the pleasure of seeing the former First Lady—the figure most loathed by the right in at least a generation—succeed at a time when Democrats are desperate to figure out how to get that winning feeling again.

For liberals it remains to be seen whether this transaction will prove to be a good deal. Yet for some Democrats the trade is indeed worth it, as you could easily see during one of Clinton's first stops on her upstate swing, a speech to Democrats at a re-election fundraiser north of Albany. The event was closed to the press, and the Senator shed her typically demure, bipartisan approach and launched a sharp attack on the GOP. Yet she knew her audience—these were hardly red-meat-craving Democratic activist types. They were rural, moderate Democrats—small-town schoolteachers, librarians, general-store owners. So Clinton's assault was spirited, but even-tempered and larded with patriotic language.

"We're seeing the slow and steady erosion of what made America great in the twentieth century," Clinton told her audience in an even tone. "When I got to the Senate I asked myself, What's going on here? At first I thought the President just wanted to undo everything my husband had done." Clinton waited a beat, then added, "And I did take that personally."

The audience laughed. "But then I thought, Wait a minute. It's not just about turning the clock back on the 1990s... They want to turn the clock back on most of the twentieth century. They want to turn the clock all the way back beyond Franklin Roosevelt. Back beyond Teddy Roosevelt. That's why they're trying to undo Social Security. Make no mistake about it.

"What I see happening in Washington," Clinton continued, "is a concerted effort by the Administration and the leadership in Congress to really create absolute power. They want to control the judiciary so they can have all three branches of government. I really don't care what party you are—that's not in the American tradition.... Right now young men and women are putting their lives on the line in Iraq and Afghanistan, fighting for the America we revere. And that is a country where nobody has all the answers—and nobody should have all the power.... We all need to stand up for what made America great—what created a wonderful set of values that we revere, that we exported and tried to really inculcate in people around the world!"

Wild applause rolled over Clinton now, although it was unclear whether the crowd had appreciated the political subtleties of what they'd witnessed. She had offered a critique of the GOP sharp enough for any progressive—even as she'd given an approving nod to American exceptionalism and a paean to US troops defending our "values" abroad. She'd stoked the partisan passions of her audience—even as she'd sounded an above-partisanship note of concern about the state of the Republic.

In a recent speech, Hillary offered a sharp critique of the GOP—along with a paean to US troops defending our 'values' abroad.

Indeed, she'd managed to pull off what many Democrats struggle to do these days: She'd weaved her criticisms into a larger narrative about America's past and future, criticizing the GOP leadership without sounding as if she wanted America to fail—when she said she was "worried" about America, you believed her.

Not long after that speech, Clinton appeared at a dramatically different event, a speech to a roomful of around 300 farmers. These were hard-bitten people who were fully prepared to believe that the Senator from Chappaqua is who her caricaturists say she is. When Clinton strode into that room, she was an entirely different Hillary from the one who'd addressed Democrats only hours earlier. Anyone accustomed to seeing Clinton on TV—where she sometimes seems stiff and insincere—would have been flabbergasted by her sudden transformation. She instantly, and effortlessly, became Homespun Hillary.

Her vowels grew flatter, more rural-sounding. "Little" became "li'l." "Get" became "git." Entire pronouns vanished, as in: "Heard there are some places in California

selling gas for three dollars a gall'n." She poked fun at city folk. Speaking about how farmers could make money supplying the specialty produce that New York restaurants need, she mimicked a demand made to her by city restaurateurs: "We need all those little funny things you don't know what they are when they put 'em on your plate."

The crowd seemed especially impressed with her command of their pocketbook issues. She talked about fuel prices, protecting farmers from foreign competition, the Senate's neglect of New York agriculture in favor of Western agribusiness. She touted an initiative she'd spearheaded making it easier for local businesspeople to sell products via the Internet: "Fella made fly-fishing rods and lures—all of a sudd'n found there were people in Norway who wanted to buy th'm!"

By the end, you could feel it: Her audience had been won over. Her listeners filed out, murmuring approval of what they'd heard. As Robert Madison, a Republican and owner of a small local dairy farm with his three sons, put it: "Real down-to-earth person. Knows what she wants to do for the farmer."

To Clinton's friends and advisers, scenes like the above—in which she effortlessly wins over people who, we're told, are supposed to hate her—boost their contention that the real Hillary is ideologically complex and surprisingly down-to-earth. They describe her as genuinely moderate on cultural and national security issues (hence her comfort evoking American values before a Democratic audience), say she has a voracious appetite for policy reminiscent of her husband (hence her mastery of farming arcana) and describe her common-sense economic populism as born of her Illinois upbringing (hence her ability to speak to the economic concerns of farmers).

"People have gained a more complete view of Hillary in the Senate than they had when she was in the White House," says Mandy Grunwald, a close Hillary adviser. "People are getting past the cartoon version of her and seeing that she's culturally moderate and sensitive to rural and small-town America. That mix has always been a part of her."

Greg Sargent is a contributing editor at New York magazine.

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Of course, to Clinton's critics, particularly on the right, the same scenes just as easily demonstrate the opposite: that her Senate career has been merely a warm-up exercise for 2008. The paeans to American values, the small-town banter, the talk of our troops abroad—it's all a cynical effort to make people forget the Hillary who proposed a big-government takeover of healthcare and banned Bill's cigars from the White House. The right's game plan here is pretty obvious: If she has "moved to the middle," then she must be, as Dick Morris wrote recently, "a liberal who pretends moderation when she has to."

To critics on the left, however, the real Hillary is far from reliably liberal—and to them, that's the problem. Someone of her stature might have moved the national dialogue to the left on many fronts. Indeed, many progressives wholeheartedly backed her 2000 Senate run, expecting her to carry the banner for liberal causes in, say, the manner of Massachusetts Senator Ted Kennedy. But they've been disappointed. Clinton has studiously avoided becoming the ideological warrior on big issues many supporters hoped for. "She certainly hasn't been a liberal trumpet like Kennedy, even though she's the Senator from New York and has all the freedom she needs," says Robert Borosage, co-director of the Campaign for America's Future. "Kennedy has been a leading opponent of the GOP's militarism. He's called for large investments in education, Medicare for all. Hillary hasn't been out front on any of those issues."

What's more, there's some truth to the claim that various of Clinton's recent public statements and policy positions have come at a real cost to progressivism, much the way her husband's "triangulation" damaged the left in the 1990s. Her justification for voting in support of the Iraq War sounded like a cross between her husband's verbal parsing and John Kerry's maddening rhetorical contortions: "Bipartisan support for this resolution makes success in the United Nations more likely and, therefore, war less likely." The vote seemed to many a huge missed opportunity. A senator from New York, the prime target on September 11, voting against the war might have given a helpful boost to the global antiwar movement, which at the time was mobilizing against America's invasion of Iraq.

More recently, Clinton's flirtation with conservative Senator Rick Santorum—they jointly requested federal funds for research on how electronic media affect children—made liberals uneasy because it stank of pandering to so-called "values" voters. But the Santorum dalliance amounted to more than a mere difference of opinion with traditional liberals. It gave bipartisan cover not just to Hillary but to Santorum as well—legitimizing one of the Senate's ultraconservative standard-bearers. That undercuts broader Democratic efforts to win on various fronts by painting the GOP as captive of the hard right.

Finally, Clinton's January speech seeking "common ground" with proliferators on reducing pregnancies seemed intended to distance her from beleaguered prochoice leaders. She might, for instance, have looked for ways to deliver her message with new NARAL president Nancy Keenan, who's been sounding a

similar message. Instead, Clinton's speech enables the right to paint prochoice groups as pro-abortion.

Yet for all that, there's no denying that Clinton has been extraordinarily successful, at least politically. Her approval rating in New York is nudging 70 percent. Many Republicans are on record as offering high praise. Consider that both Rudy Giuliani and George Pataki have punted on challenging her in 2006, even though dethroning Hillary would provide untold national attention and possibly be a springboard to the presidency in 2008.

What accounts for her success? Partly it can be chalked up to the fact that Hillary Clinton turned out to be a really, really good politician. Yet one could also argue that her success flows from the unique brand of politics that she has been practicing. To describe her approach as "triangulating" or "moving right" misses the point. For all the consternation on the left about Clinton, her approach depends less than her husband's did on using the left as a foil. Instead it relies on two fundamental ingredients: She projects pragmatism on economic issues, and she signals ideological flexibility on social issues.

This latter tactic is not, as is often argued, about appeasing the cultural right. It's about appealing to moderates in both parties.

Take the Santorum press conference. You can endlessly debate whether popular entertainment hurts kids, or whether government should fix the problem. Yet if there's one thing most middle-of-the-road parents can agree on, it's that they are worried about how pop culture affects their children. By appearing with a right-wing Republican loathed by liberal Dems, she's essentially telling moderate Republicans, "parenting should transcend ideology, so this Democrat will stand with anyone if it might help kids." Yes, it legitimizes Santorum. But it also helps to defuse an undeniably potent right-wing strategy: the effort to paint Dems as antifamily.

Or take the abortion speech. You could argue that while it might have been discomfiting to prochoice groups, it's actually a smart tactical response to the right's increasingly successful strategy of painting prochoicers as ideological extremists. Polls consistently show that majorities favor legalized abortion. But decades of conservative attacks have fooled voters into believing that prochoice groups are to the left of public opinion. The speech wasn't really about abortion policy; it was about what to do before conception to reduce pregnancies, and while Clinton stressed teen abstinence, her main focus was on encouraging birth control, a stance objectionable only to the hard right.

The political beauty of this, as NewDonkey.com's Ed Kilgore has observed, is that it makes a subtle play for Republican moderates by forcing right-wing ideologues to reveal themselves as the true extremists, as foes of the common-sense goal of lowering rates of unwanted pregnancies. "When Democrats speak this way about abortion," says one senior Hillary adviser, "it drives a wedge between sensible Republicans, who want to reduce the amount of abortions, and the right-wing crazies, whose main goal is to stop people from having sex."

To describe her as 'triangulating' misses the point. Her approach depends far less than her husband's did on using the left as a foil.

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Her approach on economic issues is, at bottom, quite similar. By all accounts, Clinton has devoted a great deal of energy to dealing with the sluggish upstate economy. But here again it's worth noting the political subtleties of her approach. Her solutions tend to be less about correcting inequalities of wealth or class and more about finding ways that government can make the economy work better for everyone, CEOs and low-level employees alike. This difference is most visible in healthcare. Whereas her 1993 plan called for massive government intervention and pitted employee against employer, today she is careful to talk about the nation's disastrously screwed-up healthcare system as one that's afflicting not just the uninsured but also large employers paying huge premiums. As she likes telling upstate audiences, "GM has become a healthcare company that makes cars." It's not surprising, then, that her onetime nemesis, Newt Gingrich, suddenly finds himself in sympathy with her ideas on healthcare issues.

To the extent that her pragmatic economic approach in turn provides cover for progressive advances, Hillary has torn a page from the Book of Bill. President Clinton recognized that if you could persuade voters that you weren't ideologically rigid, that you were merely interested in government that works, you could get Republican moderates to listen—and getting them to listen is the key—to a Democrat talk about federal spending and fiscal responsibility. The paradox is that the tactic allowed Clinton a freer hand to pursue incremental liberal policy gains. As Joe Klein details in *The Natural*, President Clinton may have sold out on welfare reform and NAFTA, but those decisions gave him elbow room to expand spending on lower-profile liberal programs, from Head Start to Americorps.

To be sure, such advances did little to allay the disappointment many progressives felt when Bill Clinton lurched to the center on economic issues after winning office in 1992 on an aggressively populist platform. Hillary, too, has in some ways followed a similarly cautious approach. She isn't seriously grappling with big-picture economic issues such as growing corporate power and weakening union strength, or articulating a grand economic vision that would help liberalism make a big comeback. And yet, for all the talk about her "moderate makeover," analysts say that Hillary is staking out surprisingly progressive positions on some key economic issues. One example: Hillary voted against the biggest trade bill of the new millennium—the Trade Act of 2002, which many criticized as an effort to dramatically weaken Congress's ability to help craft national trade policy—even though Bill sought a similar version of this "fast track" legislation as President. "Bill Clinton had no genuine long-term progressive economic vision—a lot of it was smoke and mirrors," says Chris Slevin, the deputy director of Public Citizen's global trade division. "But now that it's clear that the Clinton free-trade experiment has not delivered on its promises of more jobs in the United States and of progress in Mexico, Hillary has no choice but to take a more thoughtful, progressive approach to trade than her husband ever did."

In other areas too, the "new moderate" Senator Clinton has

compiled quite a liberal voting record. If you don't believe it, just ask the liberal group Americans for Democratic Action. In 2004, ADA says, the Senator earned a "liberal quotient" of 95 percent (compare that to, say, John Edwards at 60 percent, or the Democratic senators as a whole, at 85 percent).

What about Clinton's biggest lapse—her Iraq vote? For some antiwar progressives, no doubt, it will be a deal-breaker. And, of course, they are unlikely to be comforted by the fact that she really thought she was doing the right thing, as people who are close to her insist she did. Yet to focus on that one vote, again, misses the larger goal of Clinton's politics. As she recognizes, the Democratic Party's problem on national security far transcends the Iraq vote. Decades of assaults on Dems from the right (helped along by international fiascoes presided over by Lyndon Johnson and Jimmy Carter) have succeeded in persuading Ameri-

cans that Dems are fundamentally uncomfortable with the application of American "hard" power abroad. As Clinton well knows, this is not something that can be

corrected by merely donning a pair of plastic hawk's wings. It's a perception problem that will take a long time—and a lot of hard work—to reverse. So she's methodically built up a comfort level—and comfort is the key—with national security issues, joining the Armed Services Committee and spending countless hours mastering military arcana. This approach is far more involved and politically shrewd than just talking tough on the Sunday chat shows. It's not off-putting to the Democratic base, which loathes Joe Lieberman-style militaristic posturing. And it comes across as genuine, because it's rooted in Clinton's strategy of emphasizing smart, pragmatic government over ideology.

Of course, sitting on Armed Services is hardly a substitute for articulating a sweeping foreign policy vision that can compete with GOP militarism. But it may be a necessary first step. Polls indicate that there's rising disquiet with the direction of Bush's foreign policies. At the same time, Americans appear consistently more comfortable entrusting foreign policy to the GOP. What that suggests is that perhaps the real problem Dems have on national security is not just the quality of their ideas but that moderates simply won't listen to them. That in turn suggests that one key to reversing Democratic decline in the foreign policy arena is to do what Bill Clinton managed to accomplish on various domestic issues: Get moderates to open their ears. Which is, arguably, the larger context of Hillary's Iraq vote. "Putting aside whether her vote was a mistake, which I think it was, she voted what she believed to be right," says John Podesta, head of the Center for American Progress and President Clinton's former chief of staff. "The larger end result may be that the middle of the country sees a senator with a tough nose who is not afraid to use force."

For months Democrats—and some outside the party—have been saying that Hillary can't win in 2008. You've heard the arguments: She starts out with 40 percent against her. She will energize GOP turnout—not to mention fundraising—like nobody else. Sure, Republicans have decided they like the real Hillary. But as Michelle Cottle wrote in *The New Republic*, "the bulk of the electorate, all those folks who won't

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tune into the race until after Labor Day '08, will be voting on Hillary the icon."

That all may turn out to be true. What's more, the retail politics Clinton has mastered may be lost on the gargantuan stage of a presidential race. And the right's ability to dominate the news cycle these days may guarantee that Hillary's skills remain beside the point—her enduring First Lady image could trump her actual politics and persona. "You just have to accept the fact that with any Clinton, the media is going to be difficult," Grunwald says. "You don't ask why. You just deal."

Of course, any speculation about 2008 might take into account the small detail of who her opponent turns out to be, not to mention what the climate of the electorate is three years hence. But whatever the scenario in 2008, she has put together at least the beginnings of a winning political formula right now. Her version of Clinton centrism has been less about doing what Bill needed to do to survive in the White House—pit center against

left—and more about doing what she needed to do to survive in the Senate—pit pragmatism and hard work against ideology. In essence, she's triangulating against herself: She's revealing the common-sense-solution-embracing Hillary, in contrast to the left-wing ideologue her caricaturists gave us. It helps that Hillary, while extraordinarily shrewd and calculating, also really is hard-working, hard-headed and culturally moderate. In the end, the irony is that her effort is working not just because it's smart politics but also because it's largely genuine.

It remains to be seen, of course, whether Clinton will be good for progressives or for the party as a whole. In the short term, though, she can certainly help the party—if nothing else, she's at least beginning to develop a Democratic alternative that could constitute one path to political success. "Hillary may not be an iconic liberal, but she fights for the people liberals care about—women, children, veterans, people without healthcare," Podesta says. "Best of all, she's tough, and she knows how to win." ■

IMMIGRATION REFORM HAS A REAL CHANCE OF PASSING, AND THE NATIVIST RIGHT IS FURIOUS.

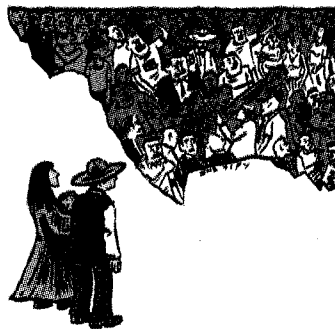
High Noon on the Border

MARC COOPER

Tombstone, Arizona

It's April Fools' Day and Congressman Tom Tancredo, dressed in jeans, an open-necked khaki shirt and a camouflage US Border Patrol cap, sparks a prolonged standing ovation from the hundred or so assembled volunteers of the Minuteman Project as they kick off their monthlong campaign to close down the Arizona-Mexico border. His presence here, at what is most definitely a fringe political event involving armed citizen patrols, is validation—at least in the minds of the project organizers—that their seal-the-borders message is finally resonating in Washington. The avenging angel of America's anti-immigrant movement, Tancredo leads seventy mostly back-bench, restrictionist House members in the Immigration Reform Caucus.

The short, stocky Congressman grips the podium in this town's high-ceilinged former courthouse and congratulates the Minutemen, saying, "You are not vigilantes; you are heroes, every single one of you." He gets another thunderous ovation toward the end of his short speech when he asks the agitated audience, referring to upcoming immigration and border-reform legislation: "You know how I know we are winning? You know because I'm no longer the only one who stands up on this issue.... In Congress, I can't promise you what's going to happen. But I can promise you this much: There's gonna be one hell of a fight." And in case anyone's wondering who it



is that Tancredo and his supporters plan on fighting, fellow speaker Bay Buchanan, Pat's sister, spells it out: "Our message to Mr. Bush is that you have failed us! You have failed our children, Mr. Bush, because you allow drugs and criminals across the border. Mr. President, you have failed America."

It shouldn't be surprising that George W. Bush, rather than liberal Democrats, should be the target of so much cranked-up ire from the nativist right. For the first time since 9/11, comprehensive immigration reform is back at the top of the national political agenda. It was put there last year largely by the President, wittingly or otherwise, when he publicly called for a large-scale guest-worker program. That call came at a point when both political parties were eyeing the burgeoning Latino population, especially in the Southwestern swing states, and had been for some time. In 2001 Bush, who had already made significant inroads with Latinos and was trying to stretch that advantage, proposed a vast immigration deal with Mexico. And just three months before September 11, Mexico's foreign minister at the time, Jorge Castañeda, told US reporters he was confident that the "whole enchilada" was about to be agreed upon—i.e., a sweeping reform that would legalize millions of undocumented workers already in America as well as those coming in the future.

But the enchilada, the chips and the salsa were all blown to the winds by the terrorist attacks and the new focus on security.

Now, four years later, the issue has finally come full circle, but it no longer breaks cleanly along right-left, conservative-liberal lines. Traditionally the business lobby and its Republican allies

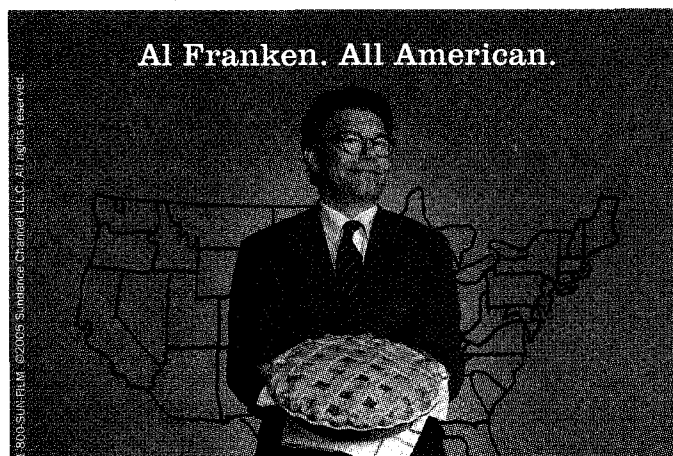
Marc Cooper, a Nation contributing editor, is a senior fellow at the Institute for Justice and Journalism at the USC Annenberg School for Communication.

have wanted only a bracero-like guest-worker program, while Democrats, labor and liberals have emphasized legalization, if not amnesty, for the undocumented. Advocates on both sides say they now realize they can't get one without the other and have ceded ground to support comprehensive and liberalized immigration reform. The consensus for sweeping reform ranges from immigrants rights' groups, the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, the National Council of Churches and organized labor to farmers, growers and fast-food franchisers on up to the US Chamber of Commerce. So counterintuitive is the reform coalition in its composition that it includes the conservative Manhattan Institute's Tamar Jacoby calling SEIU vice president Eliseo Medina "one of the smartest men on the planet." Medina, representing the most militant union in America, in turn lauds President Bush for "doing a tremendous job" of putting the immigration issue on the table. Conservative Idaho Senator Larry Craig and the American Farm Bureau link hands with Ted Kennedy and the AFL-CIO. And Senator John McCain allies with Kennedy to sponsor legislation that has been enthusiastically endorsed by both corporate and working America. "I think we now have the best shot at comprehensive reform since before 9/11," says Medina, who strongly supports the McCain-Kennedy initiative. "It's now part of the national debate, and conditions are such we now might actually get something done."

Those "conditions," as Medina puts it, include a widening recognition across ideological lines that the border and immigration policy of the past decade has utterly failed. Even with billions in additional Homeland Security funding, the fielding of hundreds of additional agents and the deployment of choppers, unmanned drones and other high-tech hardware, the chaotic situation on the Southern border remains unchanged. Apprehensions of illegal crossers continue to run at about a million a year, while an equal number or more make it across and an average of about 350 perish in the attempt. Meanwhile, as many as 11 million undocumented workers and their families continue to live in the shadows, even though they are productive and responsible members of society.

Every border clampdown since President Clinton's 1994 Operation Gatekeeper has failed to stanch the human traffic, instead merely redirecting it into ever more perilous and remote routes. "When Gatekeeper was sold to us, the Clinton Administration said that we would need the lockdown on the border because in the short term NAFTA might generate a hump in immigration," says Claudia Smith, border project director of the California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation, referring to the North American Free Trade Agreement. "But they said that in the mid- and long term NAFTA would reduce the need for immigration. Yet here we are, ten years later, and none of those promises have been borne out. Here we are, back to square one, only 3,000 deaths and \$10 billion later. We're back to square one."

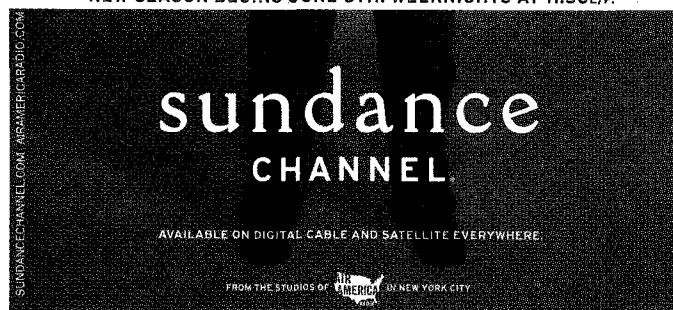
The total failure of border and immigration policy turns undeniably stark on a recent Saturday-morning visit to the dusty Mexican town of Altar, a kidney-jarring drive about two hours south of the Arizona border. Once an anonymous bus stop in the Sonoran Desert, Altar is now a major staging point for illegal immigration. The town's few streets are lined with booths and



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stalls set up by yet other migrants, mostly from Oaxaca, selling everything needed to make the crossing: black jackets, black gloves, sturdy jeans, running shoes, backpacks, wool sweaters, black ski masks, one-gallon plastic jugs of water, small plastic bags of combs, toothbrushes, nail clippers, aspirin and lip balm, even \$3 plastic trash bags cynically hawked as effective foilers of the Border Patrol heat sensors that riddle the US side of the line. Hundreds of mostly young men from all over Mexico and points farther south, but also some families with small children, sit or stand patiently in the town square waiting to make contact with their "pollero" or "coyote," who will smuggle them up the one dirt road and across the border. Thanks to the ongoing crack-down, the coyotes' asking price has skyrocketed to \$1,200 a head or more, but no one can detect any decline in the flow of about 1,800 people a day just through this one town.

Along with me on the visit to Altar is Steve Laffey, the Republican Mayor of Cranston, Rhode Island, a city of 80,000, which is experiencing its own influx of undocumented immigrants. Laffey seems emotionally struck by the sordid human spectacle. On our way back to Arizona he laments, "If you had a hundred US senators come down here and spend only a day in one of the flophouses or a morning talking to these people, you'd have this immigration issue solved in less than a week. But it isn't gonna happen. Not yet." Laffey's at least half right: The US Senate is not about to convene in a Mexican border town. But something might happen anyway.

After a barrage of anti-immigration bills fired off earlier in this legislative season, Senators McCain and Kennedy introduced in mid-May their much-awaited immigration overhaul proposal—the first step toward comprehensive and bipartisan reform. There are other, more restrictionist proposals also in formation, including from Texas Republican John Cornyn. President Bush, for his part, while still paying lip service to reform, has yet to offer any specifics. In that vacuum, the pro-immigrant forces have rallied to McCain-Kennedy. "This measure would replace the wink-wink, nudge-nudge hypocritical system we have now with a common-sense law that can be enforced to the letter," says Jacoby from the center-right. "It's the basic bar we need," says Medina from the labor left.

McCain-Kennedy would provide for the legalization of millions of undocumented workers already living in the United States with renewable visas after they've paid \$2,000 in fines for illegal residency; allow new immigrants to come in with work permits and achieve eventual residency; and as a trade-off impose tougher enforcement at the border and in the workplace. Reform advocates are buoyed not only by polls showing that about two-thirds of Americans would support such measures but also by the political clout of the business lobby that has solidly lined up behind this bill. "The only way we can grow the workforce we need is through immigration," says John Gay, a vice president of the International Franchise Association and co-chair of the Essential Worker Immigration Coalition, an organization that includes the US Chamber of Commerce and nearly three dozen other national business groups. This year has seen pleas,

from labor-short growers in the Southwest to crab processors in Maryland, for a loosening of immigration restrictions (in November the Arizona vegetable growers asked the Border Patrol to back off detention of undocumented workers). "We want two things," says Gay, "a system by which we can hire workers for jobs that Americans don't want and a mechanism by which the 9-10-12 million undocumented can get some form of legalization."

"Yes," he says before I can ask. "That second point is the A-word, amnesty. There are two sides to this problem: people coming here, and people already here. Can't solve one problem without the other."

That amnesty, until recently the private reserve of the progressive left, has now been adopted by corporate America provides insight into how labor and business have converged on this issue. It's also why the toughest fight around McCain-Kennedy is going to be within the political right. Jacoby and others predict that if Bush pushes hard enough on his right flank, McCain-Kennedy could pass the Senate with a comfortable margin, while

'Bush is simply going to have to spend some of that political capital he's been talking about to get this through.'

—Rep. Raul Grijalva

Representative Raul Grijalva, a liberal Arizona Democrat, calls himself "guardedly optimistic" about prospects for major reform in the House, where a McCain-Kennedy

companion bill was introduced. Grijalva worries about the doggedly anti-immigration stance of the House leadership and the "inordinate" influence of Tancred's restrictionist caucus.

Just how tough the fight in both houses could be is indicated by the recent defeat in the Senate of Senator Larry Craig's AgJobs bill, which would have legalized a half-million farmworkers, and passage in the House of Representative James Sensenbrenner's draconian "REAL ID" provisions after a deal worked out by the Democratic and Republican Congressional leadership. These provisions make it harder for states to grant driver's licenses to the undocumented and tighten US asylum criteria. Grijalva says only the President has the clout to bring his right flank to heel and pave the way for acceptable compromise. "Bush is simply going to have to spend some of that political capital he's been talking about to get this through," he says. The close-the-borders right is already ginning up a campaign against McCain-Kennedy, calling it a general amnesty and a "pay to stay" scheme. And even if the bill makes it in some form through both houses and winds up in conference, there's a danger that it will be gutted into an empty bracero program, changing very little. "The real political fight," says Grijalva, "will be on the exact details of the two components: guest worker and the path to legalization."

For immigration advocates to get an acceptable win, they'll need what Austin-based immigration attorney and editor of *Bender's Immigration Bulletin* Dan Kowalski calls a perfect storm: a convergence of "presidential leadership willing to stand up to the restrictionist right, Congressional compromise demonstrating a preference for action over posturing and an educated public willing to accept a more rational immigration system as the price for abolishing what is, in effect, a national plantation system with 10 million humans acting as our less-than-equal servants." And some who know the Republican Party best say it's a

tough call whether or not Bush will actually risk any political investment. So far he's talked a good game but has done nothing. "On the one hand, Bush is much more progressive on this issue than many Republican Congressmen," says veteran California GOP strategist Allen Hoffenblum. "On the other hand, while Republican voters are very anti-immigrant—you know, with that 'build a fence' thinking—Bush has been so depleted by the Social Security fight that he has little political capital left to spend. He might decide to just stall out on the whole issue."

Finally, there are back-room calculations by both parties as to who will bite off the strategic chunk of the Latino vote in crucial electoral states like Arizona, New Mexico and Colorado. The GOP's share of the Arizona Latino vote climbed to an all-time high of more than 40 percent in last November's presidential election. Pissing off a few Minuteman types might be a small price to pay to have the President become the champion of historic immigration liberalization and the elected official most responsible for delivering the Latino vote to the GOP.

The danger is that the longer meaningful federal action lags, the more the populist right, the Minuteman-style groups and the Congressional Tancredos will be energized into action. Anti-immigration drives are now under way in about a dozen states—not just in the Southwest but also in Washington, Colorado, Virginia, Georgia, Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Utah and even far-away liberal Massachusetts. Much of this activity was spurred by passage last November of Proposition 200 in Arizona, the state that experiences the greatest impact from illegal immigration. Passed with a 56 percent majority, the law requires that legal residency be demonstrated before certain state public services are offered. "We are at a boiling point now," says Phoenix-based political consultant Mario Diaz, a former strategist for Democratic Governor Janet Napolitano. "When 47 percent of Latinos vote for Prop 200, you know there is a message being sent to the federal government."

While Arizona's Democratic attorney general interpreted the law in a very narrow way, rendering its effects minimal, Arizona's anti-immigration crusaders are hardly deterred; they believe they are surfing the crest of a breaking national political wave. When I met with Prop 200's co-author State Representative Russell Pearce in his Phoenix office, he was downright elated. A former chief deputy to the Maricopa County sheriff and a former Republican-appointed head of the state motor vehicle agency (where he outlawed licenses to the undocumented), Pearce is churning out restrictionist proposals in industrial-sized doses. The day we met, two of his bills had just been considered by the Arizona Senate. One allows judges to refuse bond on certain undocumented felons; the other further tightens driver's license regulations (the first one was approved; the second one failed). Other measures that Pearce supports would outlaw "day worker" facilities in Arizona, strengthen Prop 200 and empower local police to make arrests on the basis of immigration status. "What's our alternative?" he asked in an avuncular style. "Watch while our neighborhoods burn and get destroyed? And then there's assimilation. That's what binds us together as a people. But now many, many of the people who come here have no intention of assimilating. They come here and they demand: They demand services in their languages, demand that we honor

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their culture, and that breeds a culture of war." And like Tom Tancredo, at the top of State Senator Pearce's enemies list are fellow Republicans, like McCain and Arizona Representative Jim Kolbe, who support immigration liberalization. "They're on the other side!" he exclaimed. "It's absolutely outrageous. A malfeasance of their office. Shame on them!"

While Pearce sees "momentum, lots of momentum" for his immigrant-crackdown message, other evidence indicates the restrictionist cause isn't quite as compelling at the grassroots. In spite of extraordinary media hype, including millions of dollars in free publicity doled out on a daily basis on CNN as Lou Dobbs aggressively championed its cause, the Minuteman Project was an unmitigated flop. Though its organizers predicted that "potentially thousands" would attend its kickoff rallies, I counted no more than 135 participants in Tombstone—a lesser number than the journalists on hand. When the project shut down a month later, organizers claimed that 900 volunteers had participated in patrolling the border, but in reality the Minuteman patrols—mostly consisting of people camped out in the desert with tents and lawn chairs—

never involved more than a few dozen people at a time.

Diaz, the political strategist, suggests that while frustration over chaos at the border runs high, people can be persuaded to accept sensible solutions—provided that politicians take the risk to be persuasive. "People who voted for Prop 200 are not at all necessarily racist," he says. "Some are. But some are concerned about the welfare of the immigrants, others are worried about economic issues. Others are worried about lack of enforcement and loss of control." But, he warns, "if we don't hear some serious, serious discussion of this, then immigration reform will remain dead."

Not trusting the Republicans and the White House to lead the fight, and arguing that Democrats are the natural champions of immigration reform, he says that it's "the responsibility of Democrats more than anyone else to take this on as a central issue: Convene town hall meetings across the Southwest and undertake a public education program that makes people understand that no matter what the policy, people from Mexico and Latin America are going to keep coming here." He adds, "Until there is real leadership on this, I'm afraid little will actually change." ■

EXCHANGE

C O N T I N U E D

(Continued From Page 2)

a grassroots effort like Howard Dean's. It may be the Internet that ultimately brings rank-and-file progressives together to raise enough money in small contributions for visionary ideas.

SHELDON DROBNY

Co-founder, Air America Radio

Atlanta

■ Sing along: "Cellophane, Mr. Cellophane, 'cause you can look right through me, walk right by me, and never know I'm there...." As the producer of *The Mike Malloy Show*, I was puzzled by Nicholas von Hoffman's article. As liberal broadcasters, we are used to being ignored and, to quote our fearless leader, "misunderestimated" by mainstream media. So while I was thrilled to see our network featured in *The Nation*, I am perplexed by the strange omission of any mention of our fire-breathing, take-no-prisoners nightly radio program.

I'm going to assume that von Hoffman's omission was unintentional, supposing perhaps that he is simply not a late-night person. So I'll forgive his failure to mention the fact that millions of truth-seekers have—as we put it—ended their days screaming with and/or at Mike Malloy for the past two decades on such major broadcast blowtorches as WSB in Atlanta and WLS in Chicago. Or that we have been happily employed by Air America Radio since last August. Or that our program is the number-one radio talk show as per current Arbitron ratings in our time-slot for Air America's New York City flagship station, WLIB. Or that we just brought home the AIR Award for Best Talk Show in NYC for Air America Radio (besting previous winner, Sean Hannity—or, as Mike calls him, The

Baby Jesus). Water under the bridge. And von Hoffman's an early-to-bed type, right?

Unfortunately, he's missing some fiery liberal talk radio, including *The Nation's* own one-minute editorial, *The Nation Minute*, which airs Monday through Thursday precisely at 10:57 PM Eastern Time—smack-dab in the middle of *The Mike Malloy Show*. Were he a lighter sleeper I am certain he would have heard one of these fine commentaries. I would be happy to provide von Hoffman with a tape of our program. Or a *Best of Mike Malloy* CD. Or a research assistant. Or some No Doz.

KATHY BAY MALLOY

Executive producer, The Mike Malloy Show

Lake Grove, NY

■ Concerning lefty radio, until Air America came along I couldn't have cared less about what was going on in the world. Now I'm a lot more knowledgeable and active in the world of politics. *Morning Sediton* is my favorite show. It's my morning orange juice—can't live without it. When I think of the difference Air America has made in my life, I have hope. Thank you, Air America.

MICHAEL RAMSAY

Silver Spring, Md.

■ Nicholas von Hoffman's characterization of Air America as "being in the smog" is off base. Air America is performing a very valuable public service. People who voted for Bush are listening and calling in with, "Wow, you're making sense." That's what this country needs.

ANNAMARIE PLUHAR

Bonham, Tex.

■ Being a retired radio morning-show host, I have listened with great interest to Air America.

Most of the programming, although true to the cause, just isn't funny enough. Franken is a diamond and a major player, but progressives have to learn some lessons from Laura Bush. She was funny at the recent press dinner, and it's "funny" that moves votes. Jon Stewart is a genius on *The Daily Show*, and several learned observers have mentioned that the late-night TV jokesters can move opinion much more than characters like *Insanity & Moans*, Ann Coulter and other unfunny folk. Making fun of right-wing missteps really pisses them off—it works, and it's hard to come back with a funny one-liner when that entire group doesn't know what "funny" means.

LAN ROBERTS

Mukilteo, Wash.

■ Notwithstanding your kiss-of-death description of Air America Radio, it is the station I listen to on my one-hour round trip during the week.

M. BARE

Livonia, Mich.

■ Regarding his intemperately dismissive article about Air America Radio, all I can say to Nicholas von Hoffman is: You ass baby.

ANNE SHARP

VON HOFFMAN REPLIES

St. George, Me.

■ If you good folks would line up, I will kiss your ouchies.

NICHOLAS VON HOFFMAN

BUT HE WAS A CONGRESSMAN...

■ In Martin Duberman's May 23 "The Avenging Angel," Preston Brooks should have been identified as a representative, not a senator.

BOOKS & THE ARTS

Epistemology of the Closet

MARTHA NUSSBAUM

HENRY SIDGWICK: Eye of the Universe: An Intellectual Biography.

By Bart Schultz.

Cambridge. 858 pp. \$50.

When most people think of Utilitarianism today, they are likely to think of the idea, central to much modern economic thought, that people are by nature maximizers of the satisfaction of their own interests. In its economic form, with the accent on natural selfishness, Utilitarianism looks like a cynical creed that denies the possibility of genuine altruism. If social good for all or most people is to be achieved, it will be because somehow or other the selfish decisions of many people combine to produce it. Such Utilitarian ideas, however, are but an amputated limb of the radical philosophy that once went by that name. For the three great British Utilitarians—Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832), John Stuart Mill (1806–1873) and Henry Sidgwick (1838–1900)—the proper social goal was the greatest happiness of the greatest number, a calculus in which, in Bentham's famous slogan, "Each [is] to count for one, and none for more than one." Far from being a complacent egoistic philosophy, Utilitarianism was radical in both its methods (counting all people equally) and its results, which often urged sweeping change in existing social structures.

Nor were Utilitarians political conservatives, as their modern descendants in economics tend to be. On the contrary, in line with their philosophical convictions, they supported an end to religious establishments, the equality of women, a demanding globalism and, in the case of

Mill and Bentham, a dedication to animal rights (since "each" included all sentient beings). Arrested at the age of 18 for distributing contraceptive literature among the poor of London, Mill went on to introduce a motion for women's suffrage as a member of Parliament. Bentham issued the first Western philosophical defense of animal rights since Greco-Roman antiquity, and Mill left much of his estate to the SPCA. Both, as atheists, were unable to hold an academic appointment, which at that time required swearing belief in the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England. Even more radically, Bentham condemned laws against same-sex relations, commenting, "It is wonderful that nobody has ever yet fancied it to be sinful to scratch where it itches, and that it has never been determined that the only natural way of scratching is with such or such a finger and that

A new biography reveals the troubled soul of an eminent Victorian, wracked by a loss of faith in God and his illicit desires for men.

it is unnatural to scratch with any other."

Henry Sidgwick is usually regarded as the tame Victorian among these radicals, the person who domesticated Utilitarianism and made it both academically and socially respectable, in the process smoothing its rough edges. This facile story runs up against some inconvenient facts, such as Sidgwick's resignation of his Cambridge fellowship when he decided that he could not support the Thirty-Nine Articles (he resumed it again only when the rules were changed), and his key role, with his wife, Eleanor, in founding Newnham College, the first women's college to be located right in the heart of Cambridge, not (like Girton) at a safe distance from the centers of power. Despite these signs of radical commitment, however, Sidgwick's reputation for tameness has persisted, an impression reinforced by the dry, dense and academic style of his great work, *The Methods of Ethics*. Both of these factors

*Martha Nussbaum, a professor of philosophy and law at the University of Chicago, is the author of numerous books, most recently *Hiding From Humanity: Disgust, Shame, and the Law* (Princeton). Her new book, *Frontiers of Justice: Disability, Nationality, and Species Membership*, will be published in the fall by Harvard.*

combine to make Sidgwick of little interest to the general public, at a time when Mill, especially, is enjoying a renewed popularity, helped in no small measure by the eloquence and insight of his famous *Autobiography*.

Professional philosophers, by contrast, admire Sidgwick, even when they differ sharply with him. Both John Rawls and Bernard Williams, for example, have focused very respectfully on Sidgwick in their critiques of Utilitarian thought, and Rawls praised Sidgwick as one of the most impressive of historical figures for his rigor and complexity. But most philosophers, too, would have thought that Sidgwick, unlike Mill, could not possibly have written anything that showed deep emotion or human insight, much less anything that issued a radical challenge to Victorian sensibilities.

Part Schultz's mammoth biography shows that we would have been entirely wrong. Schultz, a lecturer at the University of Chicago, argues that Sidgwick was not just a very distinguished academic thinker but also an authentic social radical, if a conflicted one. He tried hard to be a proper Victorian, but he failed in two big ways, losing faith in God and owning up (though not publicly) to forbidden desires for sex with men. The exploration of these themes and related ones (Sidgwick's feminism, his radical views about education and his somewhat more conventional attitudes about race and empire) make this book not only a superb biography but also an invaluable contribution to the history of Victorian England. And because, in addition to these virtues, it is written with a high degree of philosophical understanding and a good deal of sophisticated philosophical discussion, it is the best biography of a philosopher to appear in many years, and perhaps the best ever produced about a British thinker.

Schultz's book is very long, and even longer than it seems, because it is full of lengthy quotations from letters and diaries set in smaller type than the text. But it should not have been shorter, because he has uncovered so much previously unknown source material that is not likely to be assembled again. The reader who doesn't want to read every bit should still be happy it is all there, ready to be mined whenever one wants. And the volume is intelligently arranged. Straight biographical narration occupies its beginning and end, but the middle chapters are thematically organized: one long one on the central philosophical

ideas, one on Sidgwick's investigations into the paranormal, one on sexuality and one on race and ethnicity.

Unlike Bentham and Mill, Sidgwick wanted badly to believe in conventional religion, but it took him many years to figure out that he could not do so. Nor did he give up the ghost, so to speak, when he decided that ordinary Anglican piety was not and could not be rationally well grounded. Instead, he tried to prove the existence of a life after death scientifically, co-founding

The Victorian closet produced a cruel deformation of personality, characterized by a looming fear of disgrace and punishment.

the Society for Psychical Research and devoting a great part of his later life to experiments that tested the claims of mediums, clairvoyants and hypnotists. Bentham and Mill would have mocked these doings because they cared little about heaven in the first place. (Mill once said that our interest in it would be likely to drop away as civilization progressed—although he could not let go of the hope of being reunited with his beloved Harriet.) But the fact that Sidgwick still felt that conventional religious ideas were crucial to solving the conflict between egoism and altruism should not conceal from us, Schultz argues, the highly unconventional means he used to recast them. To the reader who finds all the ghost stuff ridiculous, Schultz points out that at the time many utterly serious people believed it, and that at least some of it (hypnotism) turned out not to be ridiculous. How would we know, without testing? Moreover, Sidgwick's attitude was invariably skeptical and scientific. For that reason he was never satisfied that his hope for communication from beyond the grave had been realized—although some members of the Society firmly believed that he had succeeded in communicating with them after his death.

While Sidgwick was testing the limits of religion, Schultz shows in the most surprising portion of his book, he was also profoundly unconventional in matters of gender and sexuality—much more so indeed than Bentham, a lifelong solitary bachelor, or Mill, whose most scandalous act was to go about with a beloved married woman for many years, probably without sleeping with her, and then to marry her after her husband's death. Sidgwick, by contrast, was not just a feminist, which we knew, but also a lifelong homosexual, which we have never clearly known. Much of the book is devoted to probing Sidgwick's role in a

circle of men of homoerotic inclinations, prominently including John Addington Symonds, the independent scholar who (in a monograph titled *A Problem in Greek Ethics*) did more than anyone prior to Sir Kenneth Dover to put our knowledge of ancient Greek sexual practices on the right track. Although it is unclear whether Sidgwick ever expressed his inclinations in sexual intercourse, and although he did eventually marry the estimable Eleanor Mildred Balfour, whom he met in the Society for Psychical Research, Schultz does establish that he was entirely impotent sexually with women (Symonds and most of the other men in the circle were not, and fathered children), and that he struggled throughout his life with issues of hypocrisy and openness in connection with his own forbidden desires. His fear of scandal kept him from embracing his sexual identity, and he aggressively protected his friends from exposure and disgrace, at one point making Symonds lock up a box of his passionate homoerotic poems and dumping its key, himself, into the river Avon. "I feel often as unrelated and unadapted to my universe as man can feel," Sidgwick summarized himself to a male friend.

Stories like Sidgwick's have been told in histories of Victorian sexuality, but Schultz has mined the intimate correspondence of Symonds and Sidgwick for priceless insights into the way gay men experienced the world in the time of Oscar Wilde. What we see here more clearly than ever before is the cruel deformation of personality wrought by the Victorian closet, with its looming fear of disgrace and imprisonment. Consider the case history of himself contributed by Symonds to Havelock Ellis's *Studies in Sexual Inversion*:

At about the age of 30, unable to endure his position any longer, he at last yielded to his sexual inclinations. As he began to do this, he also began to regain calm and comparative health.... In the third period the gratification became more frankly sensual. It took every shape: mutual masturbation, intercrural coitus, *fellatio*, *irrumatio*, occasionally *paedication*, always according to the inclination or concession of the beloved male.... Coitus with males, as above described, always seems to him healthy and natural; it leaves a deep sense of well-being, and has cemented durable friendships. He has always sought to form permanent

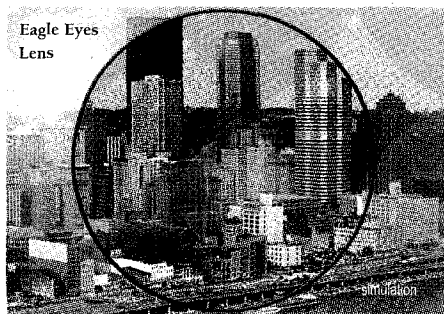
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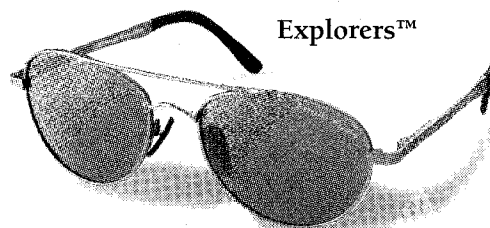
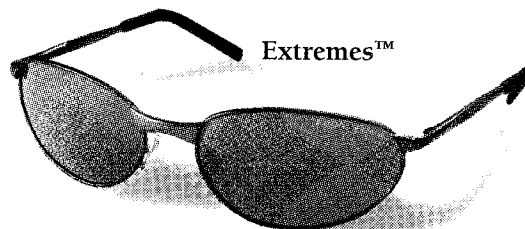
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ties with the men whom he has adored so excessively.

He has suffered extremely throughout life owing to his sense of the difference between himself and normal human beings. No pleasure he has enjoyed, he declares, can equal a thousandth part of the pain caused by the internal consciousness of Pariahdom [Symonds describes the ruin of his health by anxiety in early years, and his gradual restoration, after sexual fulfillment was found].... Although he always has before him the terror of discovery, he is convinced that his sexual dealings with men have been thoroughly wholesome to himself, largely increasing his physical, moral, and intellectual energy, and not injurious to others. As a man of letters he regrets that he has been shut out from that form of artistic expression which would express his own emotions. He has no sense whatever of moral wrong in his actions, and he regards the attitude of society towards those in his position as utterly unjust and founded on false principles.

Not for Sidgwick, however, even this hard-won journey to self-acceptance and spiritual repose. Guilt and fear keep on oscillating unsteadily with the sense that his desires are good and their objects beautiful and lovable. To read the following extract from Sidgwick's private jottings marked "(May 1867 to JAS)" is to take on an utterly new view of the arid academic we thought we knew:

1. These are my friends—beautiful, plain-featured, tender-hearted, hard-headed.
2. Pure, spiritual, sympathetic, debauched, worldly, violent in conflict.
3. Their virtue and vice are mine and not mine: they were made my friends before they were made virtuous and vicious.
4. Because I know them, the Universe knows them and you shall know them: they exist and will exist, because I love them.
5. This one is great and forgets me: I weep, but I care not, because I love him.
6. This one is afar off, and his life lies a ruin: I weep but I care not because I love him.
7. We meet, and their eyes sparkle and then are calm.
8. Their eyes are calm and they smile: their hands are quick and their fingers tremble.
9. The light of heaven enwraps them: their faces and their forms become harmonious to me with the harmony of the Universe.

10. The air of heaven is spread around them; their houses and books, their pictures and carpets make music to me as all things make music to God....

13. Some are women to me, and to some I am a woman.

14. Each day anew we are born, we meet and love, we embrace and are united for ever: with passion that wakes no longing, with fruition that brings no satiety.

Reading such passionate and slightly mad utterances, we understand that the closet enclosed Sidgwick's poetry as well as his body. And we attach a new sense to his constant insistence that moral judgments are best made from the "point of view of the Universe." For Bernard Williams and other critics, this preference for the detached point of view shows Sidgwick's emotional obtuseness, his inability to see the value of the personal point of view. Schultz shows that things are much more complex: The Universe (unlike "my universe," in the other quotation) is a place beyond Victorian morality, a place that knows the good of love and sees the surpassing beauty of the men who are its objects. Perhaps the saddest aspect of this fantasy is its unmistakably Victorian character. (Sidgwick loved Pre-Raphaelite verse and called Christina Rossetti's "Remember" "perhaps the most perfect thing that any living poet has written.") Whereas Bentham and Mill derived happiness from their outsider status (Mill insisted on being buried in France because he was utterly fed up with England and the English), Sidgwick cannot stop being of his time even in the act of spurning it.

Where Schultz's book only a record of these aspects of Sidgwick's life and conduct, it would already be an estimable volume of history. But of course Sidgwick is worthy of our attention because he is a first-rate philosopher, and much of Schultz's volume is taken up with a close reading of his great book. *The Methods of Ethics* is an important work in part because of its systematic ambition and rigorous argumentation. Unlike Bentham, who was simply not a very good arguer, and unlike the much greater Mill, whose journalistic style often frustrates the philosophical reader by leaving essential matters to be filled in on one's own, Sidgwick lays out Utilitarianism with great philosophical detail, showing with close argumentation why it seems to be preferable to the two other prominent approaches to ethics in Sidgwick's time, ethical egoism and "intuitionism," the

common-sense-based morality made famous by the anti-Utilitarian William Whewell. (The absence of the Kantian alternative is striking; it led Rawls to suggest that his own Kant-inspired political theory might be seen as the next chapter in Sidgwick's opus.) Tracing his method to Aristotle, Sidgwick purports to go through the view of "the many" and "the wise," and to show that Utilitarianism preserves the "appearances" of reputable ethical thought better than its alternatives.

Utilitarianism can be usefully characterized (following an analysis proposed by Bernard Williams and Amartya Sen) as involving three ideas. First, consequentialism: The right choice is the one that produces the best overall consequences. Second, sum-ranking: The way we aggregate the satisfactions of different persons into a social whole is simply by adding them all up (rather than, say, by focusing on getting the worst-off person as high up as possible, or by insisting on some constraints on how unequal people can be allowed to be). Third, some substantive view of what the good for a person is, such as pleasure, or the satisfaction of desire. Sidgwick, like Bentham, opts for pleasure, though he is much more sensitive than Bentham to the difficulties involved in comparing different pleasures of the same person and the even greater difficulty involved in comparing the pleasures of different people.

Utilitarians typically commend the choice of pleasure as the goal by pointing to the alleged ubiquity of the pursuit of pleasure (not the best and surely not the only way to justify a central ethical value, one might have thought). They then encounter a difficulty: If what each person pursues, and should pursue (according to them), is maximal personal pleasure, how are we going to defend the view that the right goal for society is the greatest happiness of the greatest number? And how, having defended the view, are we going to convince people that it is that goal, rather than the egoistic goal, that they should pursue, since for many people pursuing overall happiness will involve personal sacrifice? Mill had a lot of difficulty with the philosophical argument, and he needed ultimately to depart from strict Utilitarianism in order to solve it to the extent that he did; but he was optimistic about the social process, believing that civic education could produce people who really did think of the happiness of others as an integral part of their own happiness. Sidgwick was hung up on this problem all his life; he called it the "dualism of practical reason,"

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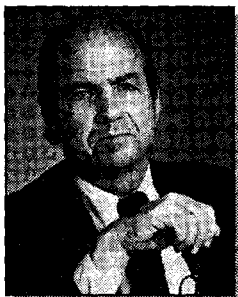
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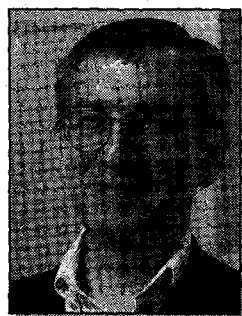
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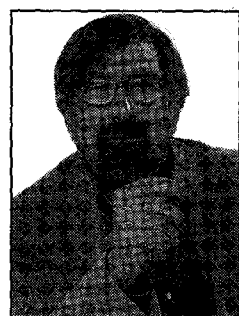
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and in the end he believed that he had failed to solve it—unless life after death should turn out to produce a coincidence between personal happiness and service to others. But he made much more headway than his predecessors on the philosophical side of the issue, with his probing work on ethical methodology and his defense of a perspective of impartiality (“the point of view of the Universe”) as the right place from which to make ethical judgments. (Schultz rightly notes that Sidgwick owes a considerable debt to Kant, although it is scarcely acknowledged, and to the Kantian idea that one must not favor one’s own case but rather must test one’s own actions by thinking about how they would look as universal features of the world.)

Non-philosophers will want to read this material slowly over time. One part of it they should not miss, however, is Schultz’s lucid account of Sidgwick’s defense of “indirect Utilitarianism” and of the central role of an elite who will run society for its own overall good. Sidgwick was far less democratic than Mill. He retained from his youthful days in the Apostles (the secret Cambridge intellectual society that gave birth to the Bloomsbury Group, as well

as, later, to notorious traitors and spies) a strong elitism about morality, holding that only a select few could be trusted to know the true principles of Utilitarian ethics, and that the rest of the people would be better off believing in ordinary morality, with its notions of virtue and vice. This two-level Utilitarianism has seemed to some to solve some of its thorniest philosophical problems; to others it is an index of its moral bankruptcy. Schultz’s rich discussion lets the reader decide.

Sidgwick spent his life on one of philosophy’s most difficult problems, which is also one of the most difficult problems of personal and political life: How can we be happy while at the same time pursuing fairness? If he himself did not solve it, he contributed more than all but a few to our understanding of its dimensions and our sense of where to look for its solution. How odd that his widow and friends became so obsessed with his putative communications from beyond the grave, when he had already achieved this far worthier, and genuine, immortality, in a life marked, as we now know, by painful struggle and a strange combination of radical openness and fearful self-concealment. ■

Norman Mailer on Sartre’s God Problem

This year marks the centenary of the birth of Jean-Paul Sartre, the great philosopher of existentialism and a definitive model of the intellectual engagé. The Paris-based daily Libération asked a group of writers to comment on the philosopher’s legacy. Norman Mailer was among the contributors. His remarks are reprinted below. —Adam Shatz

I would say that Sartre, despite his incontestable strengths of mind, talent and character, is still the man who derailed existentialism, sent it right off the track. In part, this may have been because he gave too wide a berth to Heidegger’s thought. Heidegger spent his working life laboring mightily in the crack of philosophy’s buttocks, right there in the cleft between Being and Becoming. I would go so far as to suggest Heidegger was searching for a viable connection between the human and the divine that would not inflame too irreparably the reigning post-Hitler German mandarins who were in no rush to forgive his past and would hardly encourage his tropism toward the nonrational.

Sartre, however, was comfortable as an atheist even if he had no fundament on which to plant his philosophical feet. To hell with that, he didn’t need it. He was

ready to survive in mid-air. We are French, he was ready to say. We have minds, we can live with the absurd and ask for no reward. That is because we are noble enough to live with emptiness, and strong enough to choose a course which we are even ready to die for. And we will do this in whole defiance of the fact that, indeed, we have no footing. We do not look to a Hereafter.

It was an attitude; it was a proud stance; it was equal to living with one’s mind in formless space, but it deprived existentialism of more interesting explorations. For atheism is a cropless undertaking when it comes to philosophy. (We need only think of Logical Positivism!) Atheism can contend with ethics (as Sartre did on occasion most brilliantly), but when it comes to metaphysics, atheism ends in a locked cell. It is, after all, near to impossible for a philosopher to explore how we are here without

entertaining some notion of what the prior force might have been. Cosmic speculation is asphyxiated if existence came into being ex nihilo. In Sartre’s case—worse. Existence came into being without a clue to suggest whether we are here for good purpose, or there is no reason whatsoever for us.

All the same, Sartre’s philosophical talents were damnably virtuoso. He was able to function with precision in the upper echelons of every logical structure he set up. If only he had not been an existentialist! For an existentialist who does not believe in some kind of Other is equal to an engineer who designs an automobile that requires no driver and accepts no passengers. If existentialism is to flourish (that is, develop through a series of new philosophers building on earlier premises), it needs a God who is no more confident of the end than we are; a God who is an artist, not a law-giver; a God who suffers the uncertainties of existence; a God who lives without any of the pre-arranged guarantees that sit like an incubus upon formal theology with its flatulent, self-serving assumption of a Being who is All-Good and All-Powerful. What a gargantuan oxymoron—All-Good and All-Powerful. It is certain to maroon any and all formal theologians who would like to explain an earthquake. Before the wrath of a tsunami, they can only break wind. The notion of an existential God, a Creator who may have been doing His or Her artistic best, but could still have been remiss in designing the tectonic plates, is not within their scope.

Sartre was alien to the possibility that existentialism might thrive if it would just assume that indeed we do have a God who, no matter His or Her cosmic dimensions, (whether larger or smaller than we assume), embodies nonetheless some of our faults, our ambitions, our talents and our gloom. For the end is not written. If it is, there is no place for existentialism. Base our beliefs, however, on the fact of our existence, and it takes no great step for us to assume that we are not only individuals but may well be a vital part of a larger phenomenon that searches for some finer vision of life that could conceivably emerge from our present human condition. There is no reason, one can argue, why this assumption is not nearer to the real being of our lives than anything the oxymoronic theologians would offer us. It is certainly more reasonable than Sartre’s ongoing assumption—despite his passionate desire for a better society—that we are here willy-nilly and must manage to do the best we can with endemic nothingness installed upon eternal floorlessness. Sartre was indeed a writer of major dimension,



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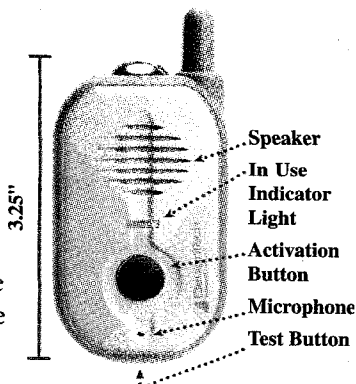
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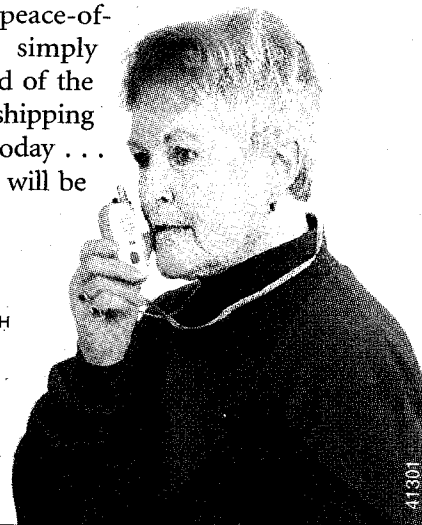
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but he was also a philosophical executioner. He guillotined existentialism just when we needed most to hear its howl, its barbaric yawp that there is something in common between God and all of us. We, like God, are imperfect artists doing the best we can. We may succeed or fail—God as well as us. That is the implicit if undeveloped air of existentialism. We would do well to live again with the Greeks, live again with the expectation that the end remains open but human tragedy may well be our end.

Great hope has no real footing unless

one is willing to face into the doom that may also be on the way. Those are the poles of our existence—as they have been from the first instant of the Big Bang. Something immense may now be stirring, but to meet it we will do better to expect that life will not provide the answers we need so much as it will offer the privilege of improving our questions. It is not moral absolutism but theological relativism we would do well to explore if our real need is for a God with whom we can engage our lives. ■

ART

The Optical Unconscious

ARTHUR C. DANTO

It is difficult not to wonder how Mayor Giuliani's decency committee might have dealt with Max Ernst's *The Blessed Virgin Chastises the Infant Jesus Before Three Witnesses: A.B., P.E. and the Artist*, on display at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Ernst retrospective through July 10, had some whistleblower

from the Christian Coalition solicited the mayor's opinion of the painting. The enthroned Virgin has been spanking the Holy Boy's bare bottom vigorously enough to have knocked His halo to the ground, while three avant-gardists—the writer and theorist André Breton, the poet Paul Éluard and Ernst himself—coolly avert their eyes from the scene, which somehow has not been depicted in canonical narratives of Jesus's childhood. New York has been spared the all-too-familiar scenario of pious poster bearers, outraged politicians, defenders of artistic freedom citing the First Amendment, and the learned presence of art historians, theologians and perhaps psychologists explaining to viewers of *The Charlie Rose Show* that the Holy Boy, in the nature of His humanity, must more than once have tried his Mom's patience. But I doubt Ernst would have been pleased by the somber spirit of cultural duty and aesthetic appraisal with which his art is being approached at the Met. No one loved a good public dust-up more than Ernst and his Dadaist comrades, who used art to assail a society they held responsible for the pointless slaughter of millions in World War I.

In his *Notes pour une biographie*, Ernst wrote:

The Dadas shared the desire to denounce mercilessly the infernal conditions which idiotic patriotism, supported by human

stupidity, had imposed upon the era in which they were condemned to live. France's military victory was as odious to the Dadas of Paris as Germany's military defeat was warmly cheered by Dadas on either side of the Rhine.

Ernst had served in the German artillery on both fronts; immediately after the Armistice, he made contact with subversive artistic circles in Berlin and Zurich and organized a Dadaist group of his own in Cologne, where he participated in inflammatory exhibitions. "To us," he said in a 1958 interview, "Dada was above all a moral reaction":

Our rage aimed at total subversion. A horrible futile war had robbed us of five years of our existence. We had experienced the collapse into ridicule and shame of everything represented to us as just, true and beautiful. My works of that period were not meant to attract but to make people scream.

Only viewers who subscribed to the highest aesthetic principles would have found anything in Ernst's work to scream at, but "aesthetic delectation," to borrow a phrase from Marcel Duchamp, was certainly beside the point. The work was not meant to be visually ingratiating, so it is sheer historical misjudgment to dismiss Ernst as "the worst leading painter in the twentieth century's most visually miserable major ar-

tistic movement," as one of my fellow critics recently put it. Artistic injury may not have been the most effective device for pricking the consciousness of patriots, but for the Dadaists creating works of conventional beauty amounted to aesthetic collaboration with the bourgeois enemy, and they were not about to betray their principles.

One of Cologne Dada's exhibitions was held in a space that could only be entered through a men's lavatory. It was promptly closed as an outrage against public morality on the grounds that one of the works—a 1920 Ernst collage titled *The Word/She Bird*—was pornographic. Ironically, the offending nude was the figure of Eve lifted directly from a 1504 print by Albrecht Dürer. How could a work by Dürer be considered pornographic? The show was allowed to reopen. Ernst and his fellow agitator Johannes Baargeld printed an incendiary poster proclaiming Dada's victory—"Dada siegt!" But the poster had to be withdrawn because it attracted furious mobs, who destroyed much of the work inside.

The Word/She Bird survived the ruckus and can be seen in the current retrospective—Ernst's first in New York in thirty years. It would hardly prompt anyone to riot today. But neither should the work be written off as bad, or even quaint, art. Ernst's great contribution to Modernism lay as much in the medium of collage as in that of provocation. In *The Word/She Bird*, Ernst uses gouache—opaque watercolor—to screen out the crowded detail in Dürer's image of Adam and Eve, leaving only Eve's body, which has been set into what looks like an engraving of a sea urchin shell, doubtless cut from some cheap natural history publication. This creates an allusion to the birth of Venus, and Eve's head has been cropped, as has her right arm at the elbow, converting her into something akin to the Venus de Milo. A segment of her right leg has been replaced with a fragment from an anatomical print, showing the circulatory system. To complete Eve's paganization, the fig leaf that hides her shame has been carefully replaced with a pubic mons from somewhere. Headless Venus wears a dog collar; and two birds, one beneath her left arm, the other between her legs, transform her into a "she bird." The birds, of course, are taken from a plate of ornithological illustrations. Ernst's Venus stands in a room rather than in the Garden of Eden, marked by the kind of deep perspective that was to become one of the signature effects of Surrealism. She shares the space with an anatomical male figure, with a sort of meter stick that may or may not be an erection. The left side of the room holds what looks

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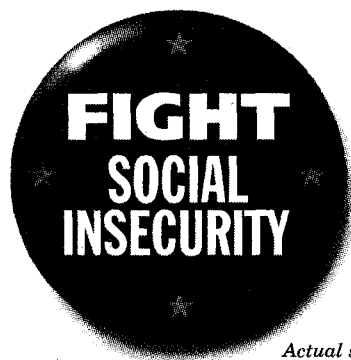
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like a wall of curved timbers that form a ship's hull. The whole is hand tinted. The little collage had a subsequent history. It was used by Éluard as an illustration for his 1921 book of verse, *Répétitions*, and it helped earn Ernst a welcome from his co-conspirators in Paris, who soon formed the cadre of the French Surrealist movement, in which the German artist became a star.

French Dadaists were wild about Ernst's early collages, and I myself cannot resist describing another, constructed on the same principles as *Word/She Bird*. It is called *The Master's Bedroom*, and again its base is a printed reproduction from a natural history publication, in which everything has been painted over with gouache, except for a whale and several fish that appear in the foreground. The room is once more in deep perspective, evoking a sense of great emptiness, with a sheep and a bear standing by the rear wall. It's hard to tell whether the animals in the back of the room were part of the original print or were cut and pasted from another source. Ernst has carefully pasted in some disproportionately small furniture—a bed with a comfy quilt, a table set with a bottle of wine and a tureen, and an armoire with a tree growing up through it. The paint is applied thinly enough that one can see some submarine creatures that have been painted over. Since Ernst had studied psychoanalysis at the university in Bonn, it is tempting to view the space below the floor as a kind of unconscious—or preconscious, since the bedroom is the site of dreams, and dreams, Freud argued, were the royal road to the unconscious. It is a small, haunting work with two inscriptions, one in German and one in French, each identifying the space as Max Ernst's bedroom, where "it is worth one's while to spend a night." I cannot help but think that the work alludes to Vincent's painting of his bedroom in Arles, since van Gogh was one of Dada's heroes.

Surrealism was still busy being born in the early 1920s, when these collages were made, but one feels that Ernst has already crossed over into Surrealism in these works, with their layered associations, Freudian overtones and sublime mysteriousness. Nothing like them had existed before. Collage, of course, had been developed by Picasso and Braque, but the difference between Cubist and (if I may use the term) Ernstian collage is stark. The Cubist collage employed an object or a fragment of a picture that fit smoothly into the picture onto which it was pasted. Braque, for example, used sheets of *faux bois* paper to represent the texture and

color of wood. Picasso soaked the label from a bottle of Suze and pasted it onto a drawing of a bottle exactly where he would otherwise have painted a label. The Cubist collage plays with the philosophical distinction between reality and representation, using the reality to represent itself. The pictorial order is left more or less undisturbed. But so is the order of reality. There is a commonplace reality that corresponds to the Cubist still life, whether painted or collaged. Whatever liberties Picasso may have taken in representing,



*The Blessed Virgin Chastises the Infant Jesus Before
Three Witnesses: A.B., P.E. and the Artist (1926)*

say, Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, his classic portrait of Kahnweiler corresponds to a real person. By contrast, if there is a reality corresponding to an Ernstian collage, it is not commonplace. It is really uncanny to find fish swimming on, or just beneath, the bedroom floor. The Surrealists were fond of citing a line from *Les Chants de Maldoror* by Comte de Lautréamont (Isidore Ducasse), whom they regarded as a literary ancestor: "The chance juxtaposition of a sewing machine and an umbrella on a dissecting table." What Ernst achieved, according to Breton, was the possibility of new relations between "distant realities" and their "rapprochement." It would explode our normal conception of reality to imagine that the floor of the bedroom is the surface of the sea. Only in dreams—in what the critic Rosalind Krauss has suggestively described as the "optical unconscious"—would this become possible.

Since Ernst also experimented with photomontage, the major achievement of the Berlin Dadaists, it is not entirely a digression to describe the relationship between collage and montage, a medium with revolutionary implications for the avant-garde. The high point of the Berlin Dada exhibition of 1920 was Hannah Hoch's stri-

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dent collage *Sliced With the Dada Kitchen Knife Through the Last Weimar Beerbelly Cultural Epoch*. It is shown in one of the installation shots of the 1920 exhibit, next to the artist, demurely swinging a golf club, and her lover, Raoul Hausmann, who claimed to have invented photomontage in 1918. He had noticed that several German households displayed lithographs of a grenadier standing in front of his barracks. Certain families had pasted in the face, taken from a photograph, of their own soldier. In a flash, Hausmann wrote, he realized that one could make pictures "entirely composed of cutout photographs." That's exactly what he and several of his friends—George Grosz, John Heartfield, Johannes Baader and of course Hoch—did. Through photomontage, they were able to overcome their aversion to "playing the artist," a Dadaist theme most closely associated with Duchamp. All of a sudden, one could make art without possessing traditional artistic skills. It was this discovery that partly underlay the Duchamp "readymades" of 1913 to 1917.

The same ethos informs the poster that Heartfield and Grosz designed, proclaiming "Art Is Dead" (*Die Kunst ist tot*). The poster also says, "Long live the new machine art of Tatlin," an allusion to the great Russian Constructivist Vladimir Tatlin. The Dadaists, Hausmann said, preferred to consider themselves engineers rather than artists—"hence our preference for working clothes, for overalls." Among the other posters in the 1920 show, one read, "Dada is the voluntary decay of the world of bourgeois concepts.... One day photography will supplant and replace the whole of pictorial art." I have little doubt that this is the inspiration behind Walter Benjamin's seminal essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction"—the death of the hand.

Ernst's contribution to this fascinating history was to eliminate painting from his collages and instead make them entirely out of cut fragments of wood engravings, which had preceded photogravure in illustrating nineteenth-century books, magazines and newspapers. He then bound these together into graphic novels, which he published as books. These collages were Surrealist in spirit—enigmatic, irrational, violent and erotic, as if they were visual transcriptions of dreams. The engravings, cut into the end-grain of woodblocks and printed in black and white on cheap paper, were, for Ernst, what Japanese prints had been for the Impressionists—depictions in a now alien mode of representation of

alien forms of life. They belonged to an earlier moment in history, with men and women wearing clothing long out of fashion, and—since many of the engravings had illustrated works of fiction—people addressed one another with exaggerated, melodramatic gestures, with hands to the brow or to the heart, heads thrown back in transports of feeling. All of this had been executed with skillful crosshatching by journeyman engravers, though the drawings may have been made by Gustave Doré, or whoever illustrated the stories of Jules Verne. The pictures were of sailing ships, balloons, cannibals, monsters, icebergs, lovers. Ernst also used illustrations from scientific catalogues, showing tools, machines and specimens. In the late 1920s or early '30s, when Ernst used these engravings, they were pictures, to use a phrase from Lawrence Ferlinghetti, of a gone world. Ernst cut and pasted, fitting images together to achieve improbable effects. They were then reproduced photographically, so that the joins are all but invisible. The two main novels are *La Femme cent têtes* ("The Woman a Hundred Heads," which, pronounced in French, is phonically indistinguishable from "The Woman Without a Head"—*La Femme sans tête*); and *Une Semaine de bonté* ("A Week of Kindness").

These singular works are antithetical to the format of a large exhibition of Ernst's work because they are small, intimate, meant to be read rather than viewed from a distance. When they are hung on the wall, as they are in the large darkened galleries of the Metropolitan Museum, the effect is simply lost. But one can now buy reprints of *Une Semaine de bonté* and peruse them at home with no loss of aura, contrary to Benjamin's dour prediction that mechanical reproduction would rob art of this quality. Moreover, in looking at the books page by page, one is not only seeing the images as Ernst intended them to be seen—you are looking at them as they were meant to be looked at. The "original" collages on view in the museum show us what we were *not* meant to see or be distracted by—the actual scraps of paper Ernst used. Since the reproduced collages are the most engaging and fascinating works in any representative show of Ernst's art, it is a curatorial challenge to present the rest of his *oeuvre* with anything like the visual excitement of the novels. Since this is all but impossible, one can hardly criticize the Metropolitan show for failing to rise to this challenge. The exhibition is an internal critique of its own limitations. By all means pay it a visit, though you can buy *Une Semaine de bonté* on Amazon for about the same price. ■

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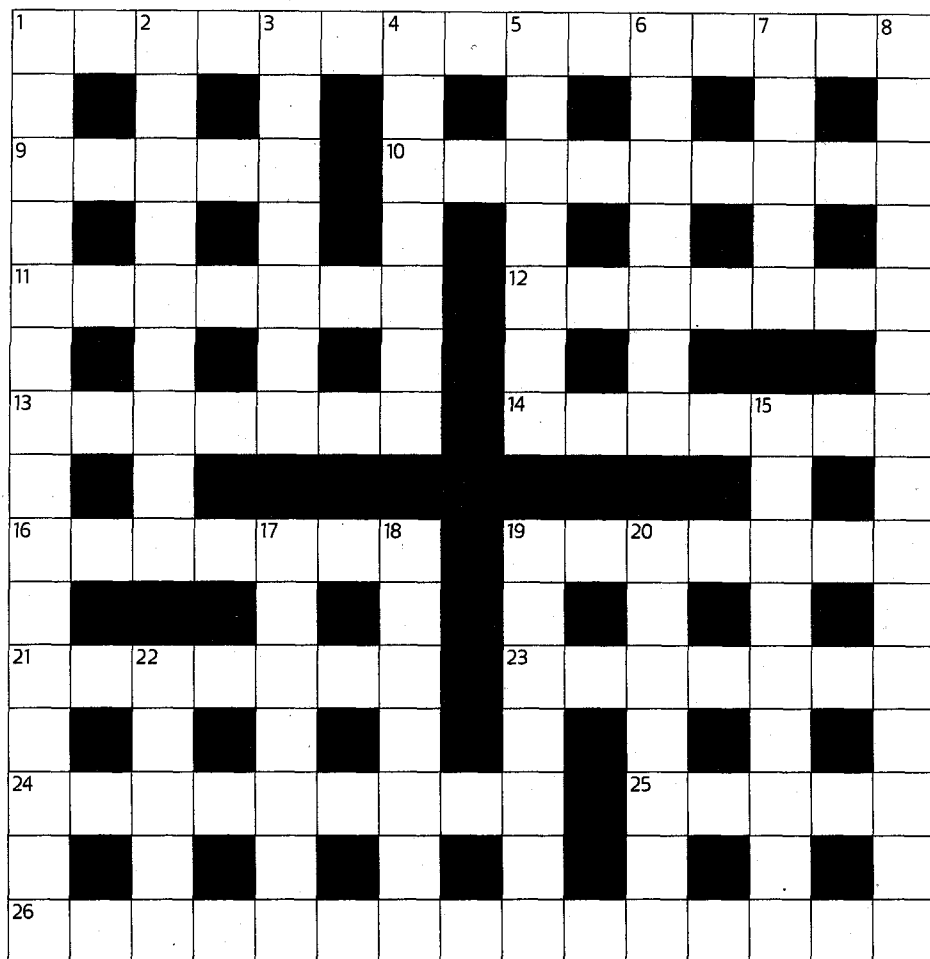
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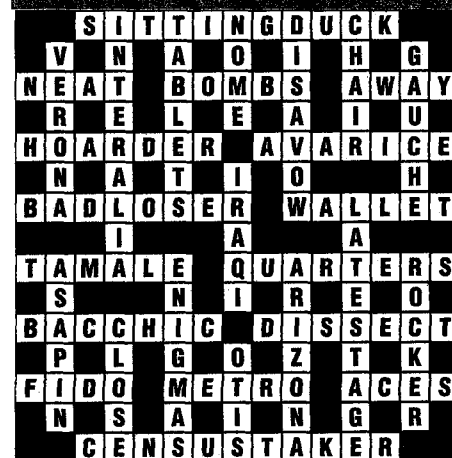
- 1 Crank up the music players, like some of those found in the woods. (4,11)
- 9 Smith might pound on it, with a chorus to follow it in opera. (5)
- 10 A noisy procession with a mock serenade, when the British houseworker has one with various beginnings. (9)
- 11 The lady's purse has a point, but it might end up being eaten by the bossy type. (7)
- 12 What could be a hazard to shipping still might prove helpful if you have a headache. (3-4)
- 13 Pigs looking for acorns, or those who cheer them on? (7)
- 14 It's the wrong postage, and may get those nasty police types involved! (7)
- 16 Mr. Lincoln evidently got fat, but the guy still had a love affair with Heloise. (7)
- 19 The Native American keeps a fairly large number in something that yields indigo. (7)
- 21 Was Doolittle's "dad" getting things up in the air... (7)
- 23 ...as these people are not supposed to do? (7)
- 24 It's indispensable in music! (9)
- 25 To a degree, the second person with one arm in the Mississippi. (5)
- 26 One wouldn't like the old rack to behave so at one time—but one uses the excuse of a little walk to do it now! (7,4,4)

DOWN

- 1 You and I attending her dance sort of soon could get sent up—which might predict a fair outcome. (7,8)
- 2 A rather famous quote, in somewhat archaic but birdlike fashion? Not again! (9)
- 3 Sick with the notoriety? Fill me a serving of it! (3,4)
- 4 But they never really lasted all day, though reputedly coming into the world every minute! (7)
- 5 What one might be doing with what you're holding right now—in several places in America or Berkshire. (7)
- 6 If pretty, they were asked to say whether there were more at home like them. (7)
- 7 A big lake, as any sort of it might show. (5)
- 8 A stubborn person might adhere to the start, when the sun's gone crazy. (5,2,4,4)
- 15 A little bow the man makes, with a variety show of the original kind. (9)
- 17 An article on one shows a little fogginess, by a person who thinks natural objects have souls. (7)
- 18 A couple of letters, as you understand, if you're hip, with modern verse to the top of the head. (7)
- 19 Not cultivated out in the open, but one doesn't want nails this way. (7)
- 20 He wrote a lot when the place for salami and such doesn't quite carry the best. (7)
- 22 A brief composition, possibly, which could be fairly tough. (5)



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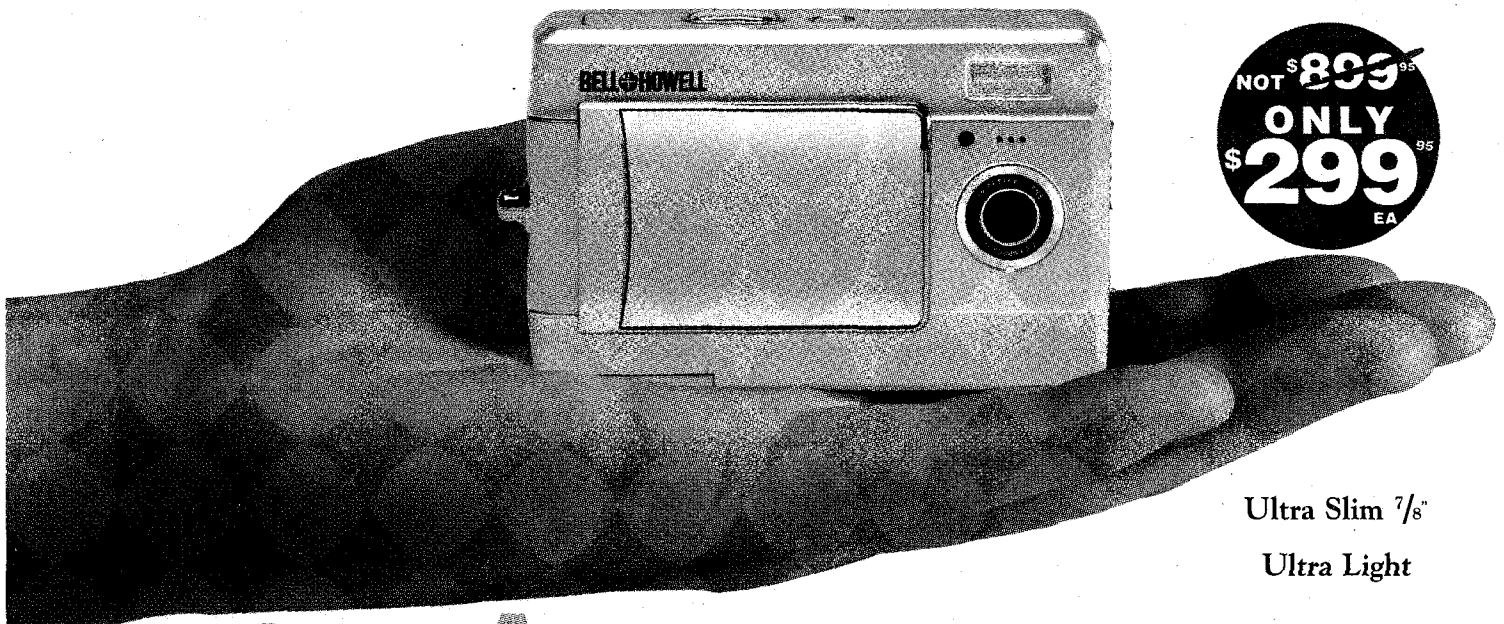
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¹Patton, GC et al. Cannabis use and mental health in young people: cohort study. *British Medical Journal*, 325: 1195-1198, 2002. ²Greenblatt, J. Adolescent self-reported behaviors and their association with marijuana use, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), 1998. ³Arseneault, L. et al. Cannabis use in adolescence and risk for adult psychosis: longitudinal prospective study. *British Medical Journal*, 325: 1212-1213, 2002; Veen, N et al. Cannabis use and age at onset of schizophrenia. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, 161: 501-506, 2004. ⁴Marijuana Potency Monitoring Project. Report No. 83, University of Mississippi, 2003. ⁵SAMHSA Trends in Initiation of Substance Use, 2003. ⁶SAMHSA. Parental Disapproval of Youths' Substance Abuse, 2002.

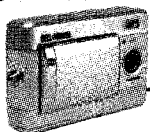
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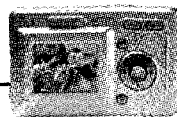
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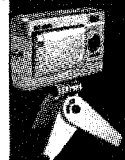
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